

A
PRACTICAL CATECHISM
ON THE
SUNDAYS, FEASTS and FASTS
OF THE
WHOLE YEAR.

GIVING

An Account of what is necessary
and useful to be known concern-
ing them.

WITH

Directions how to spend them accord-
ing to the Spirit of the Church.

The THIRD EDITION.

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N. B. *The Star (*) signifies that the Feast is a Holy-day of obligation: The short Cross () denotes Fasting-days, or that the Feast has before it a Fasting-day of obligation: The long Cross () points out some days of Abstinence. For Sundays, Fridays and Saturdays, there needs no Mark.*



The UNIVERSAL PRAYER,

For all things necessary to Salvation.

O My God, I believe in thee, do thou strengthen my faith. All my hopes are in thee, do thou secure them. I love thee with my whole heart, teach me to love thee daily more and more. I am sorry that I have offended thee, do thou increase my sorrow.

I adore thee as my first beginning. I aspire after thee as my last end. I give thee thanks as my constant Benefactor. I call upon thee as my sovereign Protector.

Vouchsafe, O my God, to conduct me by thy wisdom, to restrain me by thy justice, to comfort me by thy mercy, to defend me by thy power.

To thee I desire to consecrate all my thoughts words, actions, and sufferings; that henceforward I may think of thee, speak of thee, refer all my actions to thy greater glory; and suffer willingly whatever thou shalt appoint.

Lord, I desire that in all things thy will may be done, because it is thy will, and in the manner thou willest.

I beg of thee to enlighten mine understanding to inflame my will, to purify my body, and to sanctify my soul.

Give me strength, O my God, to expiate my offences, to overcome my temptations, to subdue

AN UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

subdue my passions, and to acquire the virtues proper for my state.

Fill my heart with a tender affection for thy goodness, a hatred for my faults, a love for my neighbour, and a contempt of the world.

Let me always remember to be submissive to my superiors, condescending to my inferiors, faithful to my friends, and charitable to my enemies.

Assist me to overcome sensuality by mortification, avarice by alms-deeds, anger by meekness, and tepidity by devotion.

O my God, make me prudent in my undertakings, courageous in dangers, patient in afflictions, and humble in prosperity.

Grant, that I may be ever attentive at my prayers, temperate at my meals, diligent in my employments, and constant in my resolutions.

Let my conscience be ever upright and pure, my exterior modest, my conversation edifying, and my comportment regular.

Assist me, that I may continually labour to overcome nature, to correspond with thy grace, to keep thy commandments, and to work out my salvation.

Discover to me, O my God, the nothingness of this world, the greatness of heaven, the shortness of time, and the length of eternity.

Grant that I may prepare for death, that I may fear thy judgments, that I may escape hell, and in the end obtain heaven, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A

Practical Catechism

ON THE

SUNDAYS, FEASTS *and* FASTS

OF THE

W H O L E Y E A R.

P A R T I.

*Of Sundays, Feasts and Fasts in
general.*

S E C T I O N I.

S U N D A Y.

Q. **W**HY did God appoint a Sabbath,
or day of rest?

A. 1. In memory of his having
accomplish'd the Creation of the world in
six days, and his resting on the seventh.
Gen. ii. 2, 3.

B

2. That

2. That man might not only give rest to his body, by a seasonable interruption of his labours, but to his soul too.

Q. How to his soul?

A. By calling off his mind from the cares and pleasures of this life, to attend to higher and better things; namely, the consideration of the eternal *Sabbath*, or rest in the world to come, and of the means that lead to the possession of it, the avoiding evil, and doing good.

Q. Why is the word remember prefix'd to this, above all the other commandments?

A. To signify how prone man is to forget his God, and the worship which he owes him; and how apt the world is to take such firm hold of his mind, as to engross all his time and thoughts, and to drown the remembrance of divine things.

Q. Which day of the week did God appoint for the Jewish Sabbath?

A. The Seventh, or our Saturday, *Mark* xvi. 1. *Luke* xxiii. 56. xxiv. 1.

Q. Does the new Testament any where discharge Christians from the duty of keeping the Jewish Sabbath?

A. Were the Scripture our only guide, one would rather think the Jewish Sabbath was still of obligation, from *Matth.* xix. 17. xxiv. 20. And tho' there be several hints in the Scripture, (as *Rev.* i. 10.

Acts

Acts xx. 7. *1 Cor.* xvi. 2.) that the first day, or *Sunday*, was kept holy by Christians in the apostolical age, yet there is not any plain proof thereof.

Q. What warrant then have we for keeping Sunday and not Saturday, so directly contrary to the word of God in the old Testament? Lev. xix. 3, 30.

A. We have the warrant of the Holy Catholick Church, the beloved spouse of Christ, which he has promised to assist continually, and by his Holy Spirit to guide into all truth. *Matth.* xxviii. 20. *Jo.* xiv. 16, 17. xvi. 13.

Q. Why is Sunday chosen for the Christian Sabbath?

A. In memory of our Saviour's Resurrection, and the coming down of the Holy Ghost on that day.

Q. How is the Sunday, the Christian Sabbath, or day of Rest, to be sanctified?

A. 1. By abstaining from servile works, which either necessity or charity does not require, and from prophane or worldly employments.

2. By applying ourselves to acts of religion and devotion.

Q. What works are to be accounted servile?

A. All such bodily labours, as are commonly undertaken for a livelihood. The

works of sin we are to abstain from every day, but more especially on this, and the like.

Q. What is meant by profane or worldly employments?

A. 1. All proceedings in courts of judicature, all traffick, unnecessary buying and selling, and the like. 2. Diversions, &c. which hinder us in our application to the duties of the day, or which give scandal, are so far to be accounted unlawful.

Q. Why are bodily labours and worldly employments forbidden?

A. Because they are generally inconsistent with the Christian duties of the day.

Q. What are these duties?

A. 1. To assist with attention and devotion at the holy sacrifice of the mass, (from which nothing but sickness or absolute necessity should detain us) and at other publick prayers; and this in the spirit of adoration of the sovereign majesty of God, and of praise and thanksgiving for all his benefits, &c.

2. Attention to the word of God, heard or read by us with respect, docility, and a desire of spiritual profit.

3. To reconcile ourselves to God by an humble and sincere confession, and to seek new strength by approaching to the blessed Sacrament.

4. To

4. To enliven our Faith and desires of that heavenly rest, into which *Christ* enter'd by his Resurrection.

5. To consider and make choice of proper means for the subduing of our predominant passion, and for advancing in the ways of virtue.

6. To dispose and make an offering of the following week to God's glory.

7. To improve the remainder of the day in doing good works, spiritual or corporal. *Matth. xii. 12. James i. 27.*

Q. Is not the hearing of a mass sufficient for the sanctifying of the Sunday?

A. Tho' the Church by her precept requires her members to hear mass on Sundays, she no where tells them this is the whole duty of the day. Hence in the Catechism ad Parochos, set forth by order of the council of Trent, tho' hearing mass be first mentioned, yet conformably to the practice of antiquity, there are other duties very much urged, viz. hearing the word of God, learning such things as are necessary for a Christian life, and the doing works of charity.

Q. Why say you conformably to the practice of antiquity?

A. Because in antient times the sacrifice of the mass was accompanied with so many prayers, instructions, lectures and works

of charity, as kept the faithful at Church a considerable part of the day. *Acts* xx. 7. *St. Juslin's apology.*

Q. What then is to be said of those who having heard mass, spend the remainder of the day, in drinking, gaming, or in other worldly diversions?

A. 'Tis much to be fear'd that they have not satisfied the command of God, nor complied with the intention of the Church, and this in a matter of weight. Hence *St. Augustin* says they are more criminal in the sight of God, than if they spent the day in digging. *Serm. 2. in Psalm xxxii. (& 91.)*

Q. But do all satisfy the obligation, as to hearing mass, who are present at it?

A. No; 1. Some sin against this obligation, by not being present with attention and devotion. 2. Others by not hearing one whole mass. 3. And not a few by taking little or no care, that their children or servants be present at it.

Q. What is generally the consequence of mispending Sundays?

A. An irregular life, abandon'd to many heinous sins.

SECTION II.

Feasts in general.

Q. *WHY are feasts instituted?*

A. 1. For a grateful remembrance of God's special mercies.

2. That on them we might glorify God in his Saints.

Q. *Has the Church any warrant for these institutions?*

A. She has, 1. the example of God himself, who in the old law appointed several days to be kept holy besides the weekly Sabbath, forbidding on them all servile work. *Exod. xii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 6, 7, 8. Deut. xvi. 8.*

2. The example of Jesus Christ, who was present at the feast of the dedication, which yet was instituted without any special command of God. *Jo. x. 22. 1 Mac. iv. 59.*

3. The example of the apostles, who observ'd the third, sixth and ninth hours of prayer, receiv'd only by Jewish custom. *Acts ii. 15. iii. 1. x. 9.*

4. The example of the first and purest ages. *Orig. contra. Cels. l. 8. Hom. 3. in Matt.*

B 4.

Q. Are

Q. Are Christians obliged in conscience to observe the feasts of the church?

A. They are.

Q. For what reason?

A. In obedience to their spiritual superiors; which as a Protestant confesses in this case, is a duty owing to the fourth commandment, as immediately and directly, as chastity is to the sixth. Prac. cat. l. 2. Sect. 12. p. 199.

And Mr. Thorndike, another Protestant writer (in his book of *just weights, and measures*, c. 17.) *the Lord's-day is observ'd by the authority of the Church: therefore other festivals and times of fasting are to be observ'd.* From whence it follows, that if Christians be not oblig'd in conscience to keep the festivals, which the Church appoints they may without sin do servile works on Sundays.

Q. Did the primitive Christians look upon themselves to be under any such strict obligation?

A. Most certainly they did. For St. Austin preaching to his people, says, that all who acknowledge themselves sons of the Church, observe the festivals of the Church. (Serm. de Temp. 253.) And Aetius was censur'd, as for other heresies, so for opposing and condemning the Church's festivals.

Q. Since the Scripture says, that six days

in the week we shall work and do what we have to be done; how can the Church oblige us to rest on one of those six days? Deut. v. 13.

A. The Scripture by those words can mean only this, that in the ordinary course of the week, there are six days allow'd for work: or God himself, having set apart some other days to be sanctify'd, as well as the Sabbath, would have contradicted his own commandment by a contrary institution. *Exod. xii. 16. Lev. xxiii. 15.*

Q. What then is our obligation as to feasts?

A. The church makes no difference between the Sunday and holy-day obligation. We are consequently to abstain from servile works on feasts, and spend them in religious duties, as above expounded page 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Q. What else is proper to be done on these days?

A. 1 To inform ourselves concerning the mystery, or Saint whereof the feast is kept. 2. To excite in our souls pious sentiments agreeable to the occasion. 3. To meditate on the virtues recommended to us, and to beg them of Almighty God.

Q. What is the meaning of Octaves?

A. An Octave is the space or period of eight days allow'd for the celebration of certain feasts, and these the most considerable

10 *The Feasts of Jesus Christ in general. P. 1.*
and solemn, such as *Christmas, Easter,*
Whitsuntide, &c.

Q. What precedent have you for them?

A. The example of Moses and Solomon.
Lev. xxiii. 36. 2 Paral. vii. 9.

SECTION III.

The Feasts of Jesus Christ in general.

*Q. WHAT Feasts of Jesus Christ does
the Church keep?*

*A. His Conception, Nativity, Circum-
cision, Epiphany, Presentation in the tem-
ple, (Transfiguration, which is not of ob-
ligation) Passion, Resurrection, Ascension,
and the feast of the blessed Sacrament.*

*Q. What are we to consider on any of
these feasts?*

*A. 1. What it is that Christ has done
for us. 2. What return he expects at our
hands.*

*Q. Do these mysteries supply us with any
motives that may raise our affections?*

*A. Yes. The consideration of any one my-
stery is enough, with the help of God's
grace, to move all the affections of our soul.*

Q. As for example?

*A. It will move us, 1. To love God,
who has done so much for us. 2. To hate sin*

§. 4. *The Feasts of Saints in general.* II

as the cause of Christ's sufferings and humiliation, and of our separation from him. 3. To *rejoice* in the manifestation of God's glory, power, wisdom, goodness, and other attributes. 4. To *lament* our own and the world's ingratitude. 5. To *hope* for and *desire* heaven, which Christ has purchas'd for us at so dear a rate. 6. To *disdain* the honours, pleasures, riches and vanities of this world, &c.

Q. *And may we not employ ourselves in the acts of several virtues?*

A. Yes. There is scarce any virtue, but what on these occasions may be consider'd and reduc'd to practice.

S E C T I O N IV.

The Feasts of Saints in general.

Q. *WHICH do you call the feasts of Saints?*

A. The feasts dedicated to God in honour and memory of the Saints?

Q. *On what day is their memory kept?*

A. Generally on the day of their death, which, in the Church's language, is call'd their nativity; by reason they were then born into heaven, and enter'd upon a life of everlasting glory.

B. 6

Q. *Are*

12. *The Feasts of Saints in general.* P. 1.

Q. *Are these feasts of ancient date?*

A. The most ancient Church-records make mention of them.

Q. *Can you give me an account of the antiquity of any of them?*

A. Yes. *Origen*, one of the first writers, mentions the feast of the *holy Innocents*, as commanded by the holy Fathers, according to the will of God, to be for ever celebrated in the Church. *Hom. 3. in Matt.*

2. The feasts of *St. Ignatius*, the second bishop of *Antioch* after *St. Peter*, and of *St. Polycarp*, Bishop of *Smyrna*, were kept by the Christians of those places, immediately after their martyrdom. *Ruinart. p. 708. Euseb. l. 4. c. xv.*

Q. *When did these Saints suffer for the faith of Christ?*

A. *S. Ignatius* suffered in the year 107, and *S. Polycarp* in the year 166.

Q. *May we not then suppose the feasts of the apostles to be still more ancient?*

A. They are doubtless more ancient. As to the feast of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, it was kept by the primitive Christians with very great solemnity. *Constantine*, the first Christian Emperor, erected a church to God at *Constantinople* in honour of those two great apostles. (*Euseb. de vita Const. l. 4. c. lviii.*) And *St. Austin* tells us that in his time there was at *Ancona*, a Town in *Italy*, an
ancient

§. 4. *The Feasts of Saints in general.* 13.

ancient chapel of St. Stephen, which was thought to have stood from the time of the apostles, Ser. 322, 323. *De Diver.* 31, 32.

Q. *Can you prove from Scripture that there's an honour due to Saints?*

A. I think I can. For the children of the prophets worship'd *Elizæus* flat on the ground, because God had given him the spirit of *Elias*: now if Saints upon earth are worthy of honour, much worthier certainly are they whom God has made perfect in heaven. 4 *Kings* ii. 15.

Q. *Do the Saints pray for us?*

A. Protestants themselves confess it. *Melancthon. Loc. Côm.*

Q. *How do you prove it?*

A. Since their charity never fails, and that in heaven they are still one body with us under Christ, and like the angels, most certainly they pray for us. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 8. *Luke* xx. 36. For we read that an angel pray'd for the *Israelites.* *Zach.* i. 12.

Q. *May we beg the prayers of the Saints?*

A. St. Paul beg'd the prayers of the faithful on earth: no question then but we may beg the prayers of St. Paul, and of other Saints now in heaven. 2 *Cor.* i. 11. *Eph.* vi. 19. 1 *Thes.* v. 25.

Q. *Was this the practice of the primitive Church?*

A. It was, as appears from the ancient litur-

14 *The Feasts of Saints in general.* P. 1.

liturgies and writings of the holy Fathers.
S. Bas. or. 20. in 40. Mar. Greg. Naz. or. fun. de S. Bas. Chrys. h. 26. in 2 Cor. St. Amb. L. de Viduis.

Q. But how can the Saints know when we ask their prayers?

A. As God in his justice permits the desires of sorcerers to be known to evil spirits; so doubtless in his mercy he reveals to his Saints the desires and supplications of the faithful.

Q. What Scripture have you for it?

A. Christ assures us, there's joy in heaven for the conversion of a sinner; by consequence that pious motion of the sinner's heart, wherein his conversion consists, is made known to those heavenly citizens: and if his actual conversion, why not his desire of their helpful prayers in order to it?
Luke xv. 7.

Q. What is the Church's intention in these feasts?

A. 1. To honour God in his Saints, and them in him, by offering him our hearty thanks for the grace and glory bestow'd upon them; and for the favours he has done her by their example, labours, or intercession.

2. To propose them to us, as encouraging patterns of Christian virtues. *Heb. xi. 4. &c.*

Q. How

§. 4. *The Feasts of Saints in general.* 15.

Q. How does the example of the Saints encourage us to virtuous practices?

A. By shewing us that virtue and its reward may be attain'd : since we are like to meet with no other difficulties than what they have conquer'd ; and that we have all those helps, which enabled them.

Q. What then does the Church remind us of on these days, besides praising and thanking Almighty God?

A. 1. To humble ourselves for falling so far short of the Saints in discharging our duty to God, to whom we have no less obligations than they had.

2. With great earnestness to beg of God those virtues, which were most eminent in the Saint, whose feast is celebrated.

Q. How are we to excite in ourselves an earnest desire of those virtues?

A. By considering the comeliness, the advantage, the necessity, the reward of them ; and how they are press'd upon us by the doctrine and example of our blessed Saviour and his Saints. *Psf.* 1. 33. 144.

Q. May we desire the Saints to give us any virtue, or to make us chaste, humble, or the like?

A. It were an error to imagine that the Saints, strictly speaking, can either give us any virtue, or make us chaste, &c.

Q. Does

16 *The Feasts of Saints in general. P. 1.*

Q. Does not the Church make use of such expressions?

A. Sometimes indeed she does; but her meaning is never any other, than that they would beg of Almighty God such graces or favours for her children. Cat. Con. Trid. par. 4. tit. Quis orandus.

Q. How does the Church commonly express herself when she immediately addresses the Saints?

A. In these or the like words, pray for us, intercede for us, obtain for us, &c.

Q. What is her usual method of begging the Saints intercession?

A. Her constant method in the collects of the mass (which are the most solemn model she proposes to her children) is to address herself to Almighty God, and to beg of him by the intercession of the Saints, through the merits of Jesus Christ, the graces she hopes to obtain.

Q. Is it sufficient that we pray for ourselves on these feasts?

A. By no means. 'Tis our duty to pray for all our neighbours; especially for those countries where the Saint (whose feast it is) lived or preach'd; and more particularly for those that are engag'd in the same state of life, as the Saint adorned with his virtues.

Q. As for Instance?

A. That.

§. 5. *The Feasts of the Blessed Virgin.* 17

A. That is to say, if the Saint was on earth a king or queen, we ought then to pray for all princes (our own especially) and for all persons of quality : If a soldier for all soldiers : If a bishop, for all the prelates and pastors of God's Church, and particularly for our own : If a doctor of the Church for all universities, colleges, scholars: If a religious, for all of his order, &c.

Q. *And what are we to ask for them ?*

A. 1. That God would preserve them from such and such sins, as are most incident or dangerous to persons of their rank.

2. That he would give them such virtues as may render them (as once the Saints) instrumental to God's glory, and to their neighbours, as well as their own salvation.

Q. *What is proper to be read on the feasts of saints ?*

A. Their lives, or some part of their writings, which seem most suitable to our present circumstances.

S E C T I O N V.

The Feasts of the Blessed Virgin in general.

Q. **W**HAT feasts of the blessed Virgin does the Church command us to sanctify ?

A. Her

18 *The Feasts of the Blessed Virgin. P. 1.*

A. Her Conception, Nativity, Annunciation, Purification and Assumption. Two days are also set apart in memory of her Presentation and Visitation, but they are not holy-days.

Q. Why does the Church celebrate these feasts with a more than ordinary devotion?

A. By reason of the blessed Virgin's excellency, and her incommunicable title.

Q. What title do you mean?

A. The title of mother of God?

Q. What advantage has she by this title?

A. Of being in a special manner united to the whole blessed Trinity.

Q. In what manner?

A. To the Father, by their Son, Jesus Christ; to the Son, as being his mother; to the Holy Ghost, in as much as he descended upon her to frame the body of Jesus Christ out of her purest blood.

Q. What then are we to believe of the blessed Virgin?

A. That God replenish'd her with his graces, and prepar'd her to be a fit habitation for his Son. *Luke i. 28.*

Q. May we not hope to gain great favours by her intercession?

A. We may most certainly, since God has been pleas'd to give us by her the very author of grace, provided we do not actually

ly affront her, while we beg her prayers.

Jo. ii. 3.

Q. Who may be thought to-affront the blessed Virgin, while they beg her prayers?

A. They who imagine she will stand their friend, while their obstinacy in sin renders them the enemies of her Son and Saviour.

Q. In what then consists that true and solid devotion which all good Christians ought to have to the blessed Virgin?

A. In two things. 1. In daily recommending ourselves to her intercession, by saying the beads, her litanies or office, &c.

2. In a constant endeavour to copy out in our lives, the virtues that were so illustrious in this Queen of Saints.

Q. What virtues has she recommended to us?

A. 1. The love of God. 2. Fidelity to his graces. 3. Conformity to his divine will. 4. The spirit of prayer, adoration and thanksgiving. 5. Humility. 6. Obedience. 7. Chastity. 8. Modesty. 9. Recollection and retirement, and many more.

SECTION VI.

The Feasts of Apostles in general.

Q. WHAT were the apostles?

A. Persons called by *Jesus Christ* to be the witnesses of his miracles,
the

the depositaries or guardians of his doctrine, and the first pastors of his Church.

Q. Can you tell the number and names of them?

A. They were twelve in number, and their names are these; *Peter, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James the less, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon, Thaddæus, and Matthias*, who was chosen in the place of the traytor *Judas*.

Q. How are we sure, that their testimony deserves our belief?

A. 1. Because they confirmed it by miracles, and seal'd it with their blood. 2. The conversion of the gentile world bears evidence for them.

Q. How were they qualified for the great work of converting the world?

A. As to all human appearances, they seem'd entirely unqualified.

Q. How so?

A. They were but a few men, who had neither power, credit, reputation, courage, nor learning to support them.

Q. Was the doctrine, they were to preach, of such a nature, as would be apt to find abettors.

A. On the contrary, it contradicted the received opinions and darling passions of mankind.

Q. The

Q. The world then was not inclined to receive such doctrine?

A. As averse to it, as a general pride of mind, and corruption of heart could make them.

Q. By what methods was this doctrine to be propagated?

A. By the apostles flying, suffering, dying for what they taught; and by promising those who should believe, almost nothing in this world, but persecutions and adversity.

Q. How then came the world to receive the gospel?

A. By the divine power of its author *Jesus Christ*, who by his grace enabled his apostles to discharge their duty, and over-ruled the hearts and minds of men.

Q. What may we conclude from this wonderful propagation of the gospel?

A. 1. That *Jesus Christ* is true God, and the world's Messias. 2. That our faith is true. 3. That we ought to live up to the maxims of the gospel. 4. That we ought to have a great confidence in *Jesus Christ*, as to the discharging of the duties of the state to which he has call'd us, and as to every good action that is undertaken to his honour.

Q. How is the dignity of the apostles represented in the holy Scripture?

A. By

A. By twelve precious stones upon which the city of God, that is, the *Church*, is built; and upon which were written the names of the twelve apostles. *Apoc.* xxi. 14, 19.

Q. *Why are they accounted the foundation of the Church?*

A. Because the Church is built upon their doctrine.

Q. *How is the apostolical doctrine perpetuated?*

A. By the ministry of bishops, their successors, who have delivered it thro' all ages down to our days, and will so continue it to the end of the world. *Matth.* xxviii. 19, 20. *Eph.* iv. 11, 12.

Q. *What does the Church recommend to our imitation on the feasts of the apostles?*

A. 1. Their resolution in forsaking all to follow *Christ*. 2. Their belief and practice of his gospel. 3. Their courage, patience, labours, and self-denials. 4. Their zeal for God's honour, and the salvation of their neighbour even of their enemies. 5. Their contempt of this world, and longing desire of the next.

Q. *How are we to direct our devotions on these feasts?*

A. We are, 1. To thank God for the graces and glory bestow'd upon the apostles, and for having brought us by their means

means to the knowledge of himself and of his divine truths; and for the means he has appointed to deliver us from all doubts, and securing us from the weakness and uncertainty of our own private judgment. *Luke x. 16. Matth. xxviii. 20. Jo. xiv. 16. Acts ii. 47.*

2. To humble ourselves for having liv'd with so little conformity to their doctrine and example; and perhaps in a very culpable ignorance of the rules they have laid down for the conduct of a Christian life; especially for our great cowardice and weakness, in being so often tir'd with ordinary difficulties, so afraid of mortifications, so impatient in sufferings, so dejected with temptations, and so frequently overcome in weak assaults. 3. To resolve to promote the true faith by all the ways and means God has put into our power, and particularly by our good example.

Q. What are we to beg of God by their intercession?

A. 1. The virtues recommended by their example. 2. Grace to continue firm and stedfast in the Catholick faith, and to live according to the maxims of the gospel, the truths deliver'd to us by his apostles; that we may not dishonour our profession, by joining a wicked life to a holy faith.

Q. And what must we beg besides?

A. 1. *Am*

A. 1. An apostolical zeal and spirit for all the pastors of God's Church, and particularly for those to whose care he has entrusted us: that God would direct and bless them in all their labours, and that none may undertake this sacred function, but such as are call'd to it by *Jesus Christ*.

2. The conversion of nations, and of those particularly, where the apostle preach'd (whose feast is kept) to the faith of *Christ*.

3. That all heresies and schisms being remov'd, the true faith of the Catholic and Apostolical Church, may every where be re-establish'd.

SECTION VII.

The Feasts of Evangelists in general.

Q. **W** H O M do you call *Evangelists*?

A. The inspir'd authors of the four gospels, which contain an account of the life and doctrine, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. Who is the first of them in the order of time?

A. St. *Matthew*, a publican, that is to say, a tax or toll-gatherer to the *Romans*, and afterwards an apostle,

Q. When

§. 7. *The Feasts of Evangelists.* 25

Q. When and upon what account did St. Matthew write his gospel?

A. While he was in *Judæa* or *Palestine*, about six years after our Saviour's death, at the entreaty of the *Jewish* converts, and, as *St. Epiphanius* relates, commission'd by the apostles.

Q. Who is the second Evangelist?

A. *St. Mark*, a disciple of *St. Peter*, who wrote his gospel at *Rome* about the year of *Christ* 43 or rather later, at the request of the converts there; who as *Eusebius* relates (*Book 2. ch. xiv.*) not content to have heard *St. Peter* preach, pressed *St. Mark* to pen an historical account of what *St. Peter* had deliver'd to them by word of mouth: which when finished, was ratified by *St. Peter's* authority, that it might be read publickly in their religious assemblies.

Q. Who is the third?

A. *St. Luke* a physician of *Antioch*, the companion and disciple of *St. Paul*.

Q. When and with what view did he write his gospel?

A. About the year of *Christ* 52, partly to expose the false and fabulous relations, which already began to be obtruded upon the world (*Luke i. 1.*) partly to supply what seem'd wanting in *St. Matthew* and *St. Mark*; relating several facts and discourses,

C

courses, as also the reasons and occasions for many things being done or spoken, wholly omitted by them. He has left us the fullest account of our Saviour's Conception, Birth and Infancy.

Q. Did St. Luke write any thing beside the gospel that bears his name?

A. The *Acts of the apostles* are also of his composing, written at *Rome*, and design'd as a continuation of his former history.

Q. What is the subject of the Acts of the apostles?

A. There he gives us an account of the Church in her infancy, and relates both the actions and sufferings of some of the chief apostles, especially of *St. Paul*, whose attendant he was.

Q. Who is the fourth Evangelist?

A. *St. John*, the beloved disciple of *Jesus Christ*, an apostle, an evangelist and a prophet.

Q. When and upon what occasion did he write his gospel?

A. About the year of *Christ* 96, and at the importunity, as *St. Jerome* says, of the *Asian* bishops; partly to oppose certain hereticks, who began to deny the Divinity of *Christ*; partly to supply several passages of the gospel history, which had been omitted by the other three evangelists;

§. 7 *The Feasts of Evangelists.* 27

gelist; especially from the beginning of our Saviour's publick ministry to the death of St. John the Baptist.

Q. What other writings did this apostle leave behind him?

A. His three Epistles and his *Apocalypse*, or book of Revelations. It is on account of the work last mention'd, that he is esteem'd a Prophet, as it contains a mysterious prediction of many future events relating to the state of the Church, down to the latest period of time.

Q. Did our Saviour command the gospels to be written?

A. The sacred pen-men, who writ them, give us no account of any such commission.

Q. What inference do you make from their silence in this matter?

A. I infer that *Christ* never design'd the Scripture alone for the rule of our faith. See the rule of faith truly stated anno 1721.

Q. How prove you this inference to be good?

A. Because the gospels shew us a rule of faith appointed by *Jesus Christ*, (without any mention of a written one) which was to continue, invariably the same, from the first sermon of St. Peter to the end of the world.

Q. What rule of faith do the gospels mention, as appointed by Jesus Christ for all the faithful?

A. They mention this, The doctrine of Jesus Christ, as it was to be preach'd and deliver'd by the apostles and their successors to the end of the world. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Luke x. 16.

Q. Who have always stood to this rule of faith?

A. The Roman Catholicks; that is to say, the Catholick Church which in all ages has held communion with the Bishop of Rome.

Q. And what is the rule of faith which all sects have held?

A. The material books of the Scriptures, or the words therein contain'd, as they themselves understand them; be it right or wrong, without regard to tradition.

Q. Why has the church us'd some restriction, as to the reading of the Scriptures?

A. That the unlearned and unstable may not expose themselves to the weakness and uncertainty of their own private interpretations and pervert the sacred food into poison.

Q. Was it the Church's motive in this restraint to keep the people in ignorance, or prevent a discovery of supposed errors?

A. No

§. 7. *The Feasts of Evangelists.* 26

A. Nothing can be more ridiculous, than this slanderous imputation; for every one is at liberty to read the latin *Vulgate*, where the *learned* might with ease discover those errors, were any such asserted by the Church. So that this restraint upon the weakest and most ignorant part of Christians, is only an effect of the Church's charity, to prevent the mischiefs they might otherwise do themselves, in wresting the Scriptures to their own perdition.

Q. *With what dispositions then ought Catholics to read the holy Scriptures?*

A. Having their pastors leave for reading them, they are to invoke the holy Ghost for light and grace to understand and practise what they read.

Q. *And this being done, how are they to read them?*

A. Rather in the spirit of prayer, than by way of study; with love, respect, docility, humility, and a perfect submission to the judgment of the Church.

Q. *Why are the Scriptures to be read with so perfect a submission to the Church's sentiments?*

A. Because to read them with a self-confidence and presumption, without a dependence upon the Church, is to follow the foot-steps of all the hereticks that

have ever revolted from the Church of God.

Q. Why so?

A. Because as St. *Austin* says; there would be no heresies, nor perverse doctrines, that insnare souls and throw them into hell; but that the Scriptures, good in themselves, are ill understood, and what is ill understood is rashly and audaciously asserted. *Traët. 18. in Joan.*

Q. How are we to pray on the feast of an evangelist?

A. 1. That the gospel may be written in our hearts and be the rule of our lives.

2. For all that read the Scriptures, that they may not through rashness or presumption pervert it to their own destruction.

In short, the devotion recommended for the feast of an apostle, will be also suitable to that of an evangelist. *See page 22.*

SECTION VIII.

The Feasts of Martyrs in general.

Q. WHAT Saints are called martyrs?

A. They who have borne witness to the truths or maxims of the gospel
at

§. 8. *The Feasts of Martyrs.* 31

at the expence of their own lives ; having given the greatest mark, that's possible, of their love to *Jesus*, by dying for his glory. *John xv. 13.*

Q. Has the number of the martyrs been great ?

A. Unaccountably great, during three hundred years of persecution which were almost continual and universal. Besides many thousands who have suffer'd since under infidels and hereticks.

Q. How did these Saints prepare themselves for the crown of martyrdom ?

A. By the exercise of humility, patience, and peaceable submission under such difficulties as daily fell to their lot.

Q. Are Christians now-a-days expos'd to trials and persecutions ?

A. St. Paul assures us, that all who design to live piously and according to the maxims of *Jesus Christ*, will meet with persecutions. *2 Tim. iii. 12.*

Q. Why so ?

A. For as much as Christianity is nothing else but a participation and application of the mysteries of *Jesus Christ*, suffering in the world and dying upon the cross.

Q. Where do we meet with these trials and persecutions ?

A. 1. In contradictions, reproofs, censures, injuries and provocations. 2. In the

lois of goods, parents, children or friends.

3. In time of pain or sickness. 4. In publick calamities. 5. From our spiritual enemies and unruly passions. And *lastly*, In time of peace from the flatteries of friends and worldly enjoyments, which often blind the Christian's eyes, and carry him to very sinful extravagancies.

Q. What are we to learn of the holy martyrs?

A. 1. To live to God, for whom they died; and to fear him more than man.

2. To contemn this world, and all its comforts, and overcome the apprehension of death by a lively faith and a confident expectation of happiness in the world to come. *Psal.* lxxii.

3. Not to be ashamed of the cross of *Christ*, but on the contrary, to value it as the greatest blessing.

4. Courageously to assert the cause of truth, justice and piety.

5. To suffer with meekness, patience and submission, and to love our enemies. *Psal.* lxi.

6. To endeavour to save our souls, whatever it may cost us.

7. To trust in God, that as he strengthen'd the martyrs, he will also be our helper, either in delivering us from our troubles, or in giving us grace to go through them,
and

§. 8. *The Feasts of Martyrs.* 33

and therefore leave it to him, to do what he knows is best for us.

Q. What comfort have the servants of God to sweeten their afflictions?

A. The comfort of a good conscience, the prospect of that weight of glory, which God has promis'd to such as persevere to the end, the certainty of all temporal evils being soon to end, and that a peaceable submission to such evils, may be a means of escaping those which are eternal.

Q. What may we learn beside from those martyrs who suffer'd together?

A. To encourage one another to live, and labour, and suffer for *Jesus Christ*; and where the cause of God is concern'd, to afford mutually good example, advice and help.

Q. What is our duty upon these feasts?

A. Beside studying and begging grace to practise the aforesaid lessons: We are

1. To adore and praise the wisdom of God, who by the blood of martyrs, as by so much seed, has multiplied the number of the faithful.

2. To examine how we bear reproaches and contempts, how we submit to the daily difficulties of our state, to the distempers with which God is pleased to visit us: to humble ourselves for our impatience under the common trials of life and re-

to solve to suffer somewhat this very day with more than ordinary meekness.

3. To pray for all that are suffering in any kind, for the sake of justice or truth, that God would give them the spirit of patience, meekness and constancy. To pray for all those, who, wanting courage, are ready to sink under the weight of their troubles, that God would be their support and send them comfort. *Psalms* iii. iv. x. xxiv. xxx. xxxviii. lxx. lxxviii. lxxxix.

4. To pray we may never be so unhappy, as thro' obstinacy, blindness, prejudice or envy, to cause any persecution to God's servants. *Psalms* xciii.

5. That we may be jealous of all accusations, and never help to spread reports which may do an injury to truth and innocence.

Q. What is proper to be read on the feasts of Martyrs?

A. Jo. xv. Matt. v.—1 Pet. ii. —2 Cor. xi. Imit. Chr. l. 2. Ch. xii. —St. Fran. Sales Introd. Part 3. Ch. iii. and viii.

SECTION IX.

The Feasts of Bishops.

Q. *WHAT* is to be observ'd on these feasts?

A. Much the same as has been said p. 22, of the feasts of apostles? Bishops being their successors in the government of *Christ's* flock.

Q. *What must we ask of God for the pastors of his Church?*

A. 1. A true zeal and piety answerable to their charge.

2. That by word and example, they may be so many lights to the faithful.

3. That they may chearfully bestow their study and care, their labour and life too, if need require it, upon their flock; and may constantly make war against all vice and injustice.

4. That no human respects may overrule them: that flattery or fear, interest, favour or faction, may never prevail with them, to prostitute their character to the promoting of evil, nor awe them into a treacherous silence.

C 6

Q. What

Q. What other prayers are we to make for them?

A. That no human consideration of favour, interest, party or dependence may make them betray the gospel by flattery or compliance; but that by word and example they may be as so many lights of the world, in dissipating the darkness of error and vice, and may conduct the faithful to a happy eternity.

Q. For whom besides are we to pray?

A. For the people whom this Saint enlighten'd with his doctrine and example; that they may be stedfast in the doctrine he preach'd; or, if they be fallen from the Church, that they may return to her faith and communion.

Q. What are we to ask for ourselves?

A. 1. That God would bless us with good Pastors and directors, and mercifully exclude all those from being pastors of his flock, who are not by him call'd to this function and fitted for the just discharge of all its obligations.

2. Grace, that we be not wanting in our Duty to them.

Q. What is the people's duty to their pastors?

A. 1. To honour and respect them as the ministers of *Christ*, and the dispensers

§. 9. *The feasts of Bishops.* 37

fers or stewards of the mysteries of God.

1 *Cor.* iv. 1. 1 *Thes.* v. 12, 13.

2. To pray daily for them, and especially when they are exposed to any danger or persecution, or are engag'd in any difficult affairs for God's honour or the Church's good. *Col.* iv, 3.

3. To provide for their subsistence. *Matth.* x. 10. 1 *Cor.* ix. 7. 1 *Tim.* v. 17.

4. To pay obedience and submission to their orders and directions. *Matth.* xxiii. 2, 3. *Luke* x. 16. *Heb.* xiii. 17.

5. Not rashly to censure their doctrine or proceedings; not to publish their faults, but where these seem to be of dangerous consequence, to reveal them to their superiors. *Exod.* xxii. 28. *Num.* xii. 10. xiv. and xvi.

Q. How does God punish his people when they are disobedient or disrespectful to his ministers?

A. Sometimes in a visible manner; and frequently by removing good pastors, and suffering others to come in their place, that are not govern'd by the spirit of truth and piety. *Os.* xiii. 11. *Isa.* lvi. 10. *Zach.* xi. 16.

Q. What are the people to do, when they are so unhappy as to have bad pastors?

A. This being an effect of God's anger, they

they must endeavour by penance, and by humble and earnest prayer to appease his indignation.

SECTION X.

The Feasts of Confessors.

Q. *WHAT* Saints are call'd confessors?

A. In the primitive Church martyr and confessor were names of the same import, and were given to those that suffer'd banishment, loss of goods, torments or imprisonment for the faith of *Christ*.

Q. *Is this the meaning of the word confessor at present?*

A. No. For these many ages all pious and godly men in general have been call'd confessors, who, by holiness of life, without suffering death, have confess'd the faith of *Christ*, and borne testimony to the maxims of the gospel.

Q. *What are we to do on these feasts?*

A. We are seriously to consider those virtues which made them Saints, and to beg of God by their intercession grace to imitate them.

Q. *What virtues may we reasonably suppose to have been in all confessors?*

A. A live-

A. A lively faith, a great love of God, humility, prayer, patience, mortification, retirement, a contempt of the world, charity to the poor, and such other virtues as were agreeable to their state of life.

Q. *What may we learn from such Saints as work'd at a trade?*

A. To work for heaven as well as for bread, by daily offering to God our labours, and joining the exercises of religious duties to those of our profession, as prayer, fasting, watching and alms.

2. To be faithful in what we have undertaken, not only in regard of our neighbour, by avoiding whatever may be to his prejudice, but likewise to God, and our own soul, by a watchful care against all the suggestions of a covetous, worldly or solicitous temper.

3. To espouse on all occasions the cause of virtue, piety, justice and truth.

Q. *What may we learn from Saints who have been falsely accus'd and slander'd?*

A. When with peace and moderation we have justified ourselves, if our plea be not receiv'd, we are then to imitate the silence and humility of *Jesus Christ*, and submit to the scourge God is pleas'd to lay upon us; which is just from his hand, tho' not from them, who appear against us.

Q. *What admonition may be taken by married*

married persons from Saints that liv'd in the conjugal state?

A. That being God's vicegerents in the government of their family, they must give an account of all the disorders whether in children or servants, occasion'd by their ill example or neglect.

2. That no pretext of solicitude or worldly care must hinder them from those duties which are necessary for their eternal good.

Q. *For whom are we particularly to pray on these feasts?*

A. For those that are members of the same religious order, or are engaged in the same functions or charges, as the Saints were whose feast it is.

SECTION XI.

The Feasts of Virgins.

Q. **W**HAT is our duty on these days?

A. 1. To encourage ourselves in the service of God, and in a contempt of the vanities, flatteries, and pleasures of the world. 2. To beg a share of those graces, which raised them to so eminent a degree of sanctity.

Q. *What virtues may we suppose to have been the ornaments of these pure souls?*

A. The

A. The same as we have consider'd in the confessors.

Q. For whom in particular are we to pray on these feasts?

A. 1. For virgins, who by a solemn obligation have dedicated their bodies and souls to God, that they may be constant in their engagements.

2. For young virgins, who are yet disengag'd, that in all proposals of changing their condition they may conclude on nothing, without first consulting heaven in fasting, and prayer; and that they may have courage against the threats and flatteries of the world, and rather chuse the humility and contempt of the gospel; than the offers of great honour and riches, to the hazard of their souls.

3. For those under the temptation of their youthful age, any ways exposed thro' necessity, heedlessness, or levity; that vanity, self love, curiosity, prodigality, levity, and the desire of being esteem'd, may never over-rule their hearts, nor make them to forget that they are soon to be reduc'd to dust and clay, and that they are made for a better world.

SECTION XII.

The Feasts of Widows.

Q. *HOW are we to keep their feasts?*

A. 1. We must thank God for calling persons of all states to a holy life.

2. Encourage ourselves after their example to an exact compliance with the duties of our state.

Q. *What instructions do these Saints give to widows?*

A. To mortify their senses, to condemn all unnecessary and vain ornaments, to govern their tongue, give a true Christian education to their children, and to employ their money and time, in the relief of widows, orphans, and the sick.

Q. *What ought married women to consider on these feasts?*

A. Their obligations with respect to their husbands, their children and their servants.

Q. *Why so?*

A. Because we find no widows in the calender of Saints, but what were first sanctify'd in the state of marriage by a faithful discharge of the three aforesaid duties.

Q. *What*

Q. What then are the duties of married women to their husbands?

A. 1. They owe them respect and honour, obedience and submission, whatever temper they may be of. *Col.* iii. 18. *Eph.* v. 22. &c. *Tit.* ii. 4, 5.

2. They are to endeavour by their example, patience, regularity of life, and by all means possible to invite them to the ways of truth and virtue. *1 Pet.* iii. 1.

3. They are not to dispose of the goods, nor to give any considerable alms out of the common purse, without their husband's permission.

Q. How are married women to go in cloaths?

A. According to their condition and the rules of modesty, without painting, patching, and whatever else betokens a vain and worldly spirit. *1 Tim.* ii. 9, 10. *1 Pet.* iii. 3.

Q. What are the duties of mothers to their children?

A. They are oblig'd to give them, 1. Instruction, 2. Good example, and 3. seasonable correction. See the feast of *St. Anne*, July 26.

Q. What is the duty of a mistress of a family in regard to her servants?

A. She is to take care. 1. That they be obedient to God and his Church.

2. That

2. That they be instructed in the principles of religion, and be not absent from prayers. *1 Tim. v. 8.*

3. That they be not addicted to any vice.

4. That there be no familiarities or intrigues between those of different sex.

5. That she be not harsh nor peevish to them, nor yet be too familiar with them; and by no means must she suffer them to be familiar with her children.

6. That their wages be exactly paid them. *Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 15. Tob. iv. 15. Jam. v. 4.*

SECTION XIII.

The Feasts of Holy Penitents.

Q *W* **H** *A* **T's** *to be done on these feasts?*

A. We are, 1. To adore and praise the mercy of God, who desires not the death of sinners. 2. To thank him for sparing them and ourselves, while by sin we were his enemies.

3. Not to be discourag'd whatever sins we have committed, (for no crime is more provoking than a distrust of his goodness) but to place an humble confidence in the mercy of God, who offers his grace to
all,

§. 13. *The Feasts of Holy Penitents.* 45

all, and upon a sincere conversion never fails to change vessels of weakness into vessels of honour.

4. To recruit our confidence in consideration of the mercy of God shew'd them, and to beg the like for ourselves.

5. To humble ourselves for our niceness and self-love, and from their example to invigorate our resolutions of doing worthy fruits of penance, of amending our lives, and avoiding all occasions of sin for the future, as also of repairing, by our good example, the scandals we may have given.

6. To seek out our predominant sin, that immediately we may set ourselves to the rooting of it out.

7. To resolve upon withdrawing from whatever is dangerous, unprofitable, or unbecoming our state, and learn from the example of the Saint what methods should be taken to overcome habitual sin.

Q. What method have they recommended?

A. Some proper retirement, where the sinner, shelter'd from all occasions of sin, by application to prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading, and the frequent visits of a charitable director, may have the opportunity of remedies proportion'd to the diseases of the soul; and, with God's grace, work a true change in
his

his heart, without which there cannot possibly be a true repentance.

Q. Whom are we to pray for on these feasts?

A. 1. For ourselves and all engag'd in sin, that God would give us the spirit of penance.

2. For all we ever have scandaliz'd.

3. For all those dejected souls whose immoderate fears keep them at a distance from God.

4. For all seduc'd by vice and error, that they may not be obstinate against the light; and that neither the thoughts of what the world may say, nor the difficulty of changing, may hinder them from entering into the ways of salvation.

SECTION XIV.

The Dedication of a Church.

Q. WHAT mean you by the dedication of a church?

A. A ceremony whereby a material edifice is consecrated by a bishop to the service of God alone, and to be the house of prayer.

Q. Why is this ceremony perform'd with so much solemnity?

A. Because 'tis a figure of that dedication

§. 14. *The Dedication of a Church.* 47

tion, which is to be made in heaven, of the living Church of the Saints, which *Christ* shall one day *present to his Father*, pure and spotless, to be for ever employ'd in praising his majesty and his mercy. *Eph. v. 27.*

Q. Why is there an annual commemoration of this ceremony?

A. 1. To thank God, for vouchsafing to appoint a place, where he is pleas'd to hear our prayers, and to feed us with his word, and the adorable body of *Jesus Christ*.

2. To increase our reverence to this holy place, and to the sacred mysteries that therein are daily celebrated.

3. To put us in mind that we are the temples of God, and that we are one day to make a part of the spiritual edifice in the heavenly *Jerusalem*.

Q. Is this ceremony of the dedication of churches, of antient date?

A. God himself commanded the dedication of *Solomon's temple*. And amongst Christians it has been in use ever since they had the liberty of building temples for God's service. *Euseb. l. 10. c. iii.*

Q. What's requir'd of Christians to the due celebration of this feast?

A. 1. That they renew the respect due to the house of God.

2. That they give proof of this respect,
by

by contributing to the best of their power, to the adorning of it.

3. That they choose the church before all other places, for the making of their prayer.

4. That they consider themselves as the living temples of God, that they renew the promises made in baptism when they were first consecrated, and resolve never more to defile their souls by any sin.

5. That they beg of God to do with them as he pleases, upon earth, even to cut and hew and wear them with afflictions, provided they may have a place in the Church of heaven.

SECTION XV.

Of Fasting and Abstinence in general.

Q. *WHAT do you mean by Fasting?*

A. To Fast, is to abstain from certain meats and to make but one meal in 24 hours.

Q. *From what kind of meats are we to abstain on fasting-days?*

A. From the flesh of animals that live on the earth or in the air, and likewise from eggs in *Lent*, and in some dioceses from all milk meats.

Q. T

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Q. To what purpose do you abstain from these meats?

A. To mortify the body (these being more nourishing than other kind of food) and by that means to do penance for our sins.

Q. Is not this contrary to St. Paul, who bids us eat whatsoever is sold in the shambles? 1 Cor. x. 25.

A. St. Paul in that place speaks not to Christians, who abstain'd for mortification sake; but to some who scrupl'd to eat any such meat, for fear it might have been offer'd to some idol, and for that reason be unclean.

Q. Have you any warrant from the holy Scriptures, for this Catholick practice of abstaining from certain meats?

A. In the holy scriptures we find abstinence commanded, commended and rewarded.

Q. Where is abstinence commanded?

A. 1. God forbid *Adam* to eat of the tree of knowledge. 2. *Noe* and his children to eat flesh with the blood in it. 3. The *Israelites* to eat, or so much as to keep leaven'd bread during the seven days of their *Pasch*. 4. He commanded such, as consecrated themselves to his service, to abstain from wine and all inebriating liquors. 5. The first Christians abstain'd

D

from

from blood-meats, pursuant to the apostles orders. *Gen.* ii. 17. ix. 4. *Exo.* xiii. 7. *Lev.* vi. 3. *Jud.* xiii. 14. *Acts* xv. 20.

Q. Where is abstinence commended?

A. 1. *He shall be great* (says the Angel of St. John Baptist) *in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.*

2. *His food was locusts and wild honey.* 3. Toby, when others eat of the meats of Gentiles took care of his soul, and was never polluted with their meats. *Luke* i. 15. *Mat.* iii. 4. *Tob.* i. 12.

Q. Where is abstinence rewarded?

A. *I eat* (says Daniel) *no pleasant bread; neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, 'till three whole weeks were fulfill'd——And I Daniel alone saw the vision, for the men that were with me saw it not.* *c.* x. 3, 7.

Q. At what hour may one dine on fasting days?

A. Not much before noon.

Q. Is a collation at night allowable?

A. The Church allows it, provided it exceed not the fourth part of a moderate meal: but there ought to be nothing in it contrary to the approv'd custom of the country, or that is too nourishing or costly.

Q. Who are oblig'd to fast?

A. All that are past their one and twentieth year, unless they be lawfully dispensed withal.

Q. What

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Q. What persons may be lawfully dispensed withal?

A. Nurses that give suck; women with child; such as are sick or worn with age, or employ'd in labours inconsistent with fasting; and in short, all that cannot fast without ruining their healths.

Q. Can a physician dispense his patient from fasting?

A. The physician can tell us when fasting may be prejudicial to our health, but he can give us no dispensation.

Q. Why not?

A. Because none can be exempted from the laws of any state, but by those who have a share in the government of that state.

Q. What then must be done, when the physician tells us that fasting is inconsistent with our health?

A. We must apply ourselves for a dispensation to the pastors of the Church; since they alone have power to dispense with her laws.

Q. How may we make our fasting acceptable to God?

A. By accompanying it with prayer, alms-deeds, and other good works; and by avoiding sin with our greatest care. *Isai. lviii. 2, &c. Tob. xii. 8, &c.*

Q. Are such as cannot fast, under no other obligation?

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A. Yes.

A. Yes. They ought in all they can to enter into the spirit of the Church, by prayer, alms, mortifying their passions, and by abridging themselves of some lawful satisfactions.

Q. What sin is it, wilfully and without a lawful dispensation to break the fasts of the Church?

A. A mortal sin.

Q. But, if I have once broken my fast, may I not for that day eat as often as I please without being guilty of any more sins?

A. No. For as many times as one eats contrary to the Church's law, there are so many sins committed.

Q. Which are the fasting-days appointed by the Church?

A. 1. All *Lent*, except the *Sundays*, 2. The *Ember-days* of the four seasons, 3. The vigils of the more solemn feasts; and 4. All *Fridays* out of *Lent* and the *Ember-weeks* that are not holy days, except those that fall between *Christmas-Eve* and the 13th of *January*, or between *Easter-day* and *Whitsunday*.

Q. Which are days of abstinence only?

A. 1. All the *Sundays* in *Lent*. 2. *St. Mark's day*. 3. The three *Rogation-days*. 4. *Saturdays* throughout the year, with the *Fridays* excepted above unless it be *Christmas-day*.

SECTION XVI.

Ember-Days in general.

Q. *WHAT are Ember-days ?*

A. They are fasts, which the Church commands to be kept in some one week of each of the four seasons of the year, on *Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.*

Q. *Whence comes the name ?*

A. From the primitive custom of using haircloth and ashes in times of publick penance, or because on these days the Christians fasting 'till night, did then content themselves with a cake baked under the embers or ashes, which was call'd *panis subcineritius, ember bread.*

Q. *When were these fasts instituted ?*

A. They were observed in the Church of Rome before the fifth Age, and St. Leo, who was then Pope, affirms them to be of apostolical tradition.

Q. *For what reasons are they observed ?*

A. For three reasons.

Q. *What is the first reason ?*

A. To consecrate and sanctify every season of the year, by a penance of some days. The Church thereby giving us to un-

derstand, that the *spirit* of penance is always to be preserv'd, and that the *exercise* of it is from time to time to be resum'd.

Q. What's the second reason?

A. To make by abstinence a kind of sacrifice of the fruits which the earth by God's blessing has produc'd: to thank him for them; to beg he would please to preserve what already he has bestow'd, and give a blessing to what we next expect.

Q. What's the third reason?

A. To beg of God good pastors for his Church: Her ministers being generally ordain'd at these times.

Q. Why is the whole Church engag'd in prayer and fasting for the obtaining of good pastors?

A. Because the salvation of the people depends in a great degree upon their pastors. God sends them good pastors out of his pure mercy; and he suffers bad in punishment of the peoples sins. *Isa. lvi. 10. Zach. xi. 16.*

Q. For what intentions then are we to pray and fast on Ember-days?

A. For the intentions of the Church, as they have just now been explicated.

Q. What prayers are proper on these occasions?

A. The penitential psalms, the long litanies and such as the manuals afford us for
the

the pastors of the Church and the fruits of earth.

Q. When do the Ember days fall?

A. They are always the first *Wednesday*, *Friday* and *Saturday* after the first *Sunday* in *Lent*, after *Whitsunday*, after *September* 14th, and after *December* 13th.

SECTION XVII.

VIGILS.

Q. WHAT is meant by a Vigil?

A. The day next before certain holy-days, viz. before the feasts of the *Nativity*, *Epiphany*, and *Ascension* of our Saviour; *Pentecost*; the *Purification*, *Assumption* and *Nativity* of the blessed *Virgin*; the feasts of *St. John Baptist*, the *Apostles*, *St. Laurence* and of *All-Saints*.

Q. Why are the days before those feasts call'd Vigils?

A. From the latin *Vigilia*, watching, it being customary in the primitive times for the people to meet at Church and spend a considerable part of the night that preceded certain holy-days in watching and prayer.

Q. What is the Church's design in appointing them still to be observ'd, tho' the custom of watching be generally laid aside?

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A. That

A. That by penance, humiliation and prayer, we may prepare our souls for a due observation of the ensuing solemnity. Hence the *Vigils* above mention'd are all fasts except those of the *Epiphany* and *Ascension*.

Q. Why are fasting, humiliation and prayer, prescrib'd on these days of preparation?

A. 1. To cure our pride and self-love, the greatest obstacles to the grace of God.

2. To punish past faults.

3. To appease God's anger.

4. To dispose ourselves for receiving the effects of his mercy.

SECTION XVIII.

Q. **H**OW ought we to begin the month?

A. In such a manner, that, if it should be our last, it may be the beginning of a happy eternity; and in order to this we should make an offering of ourselves to God, and beg his assistance for the faithful discharge of our duty in it, and the amendment of all the failings of the last.

Q. How ought we to end it?

A. By thanking God for all his blessings, and asking pardon with a contrite and humble heart for all the sins and failings of the month.

Practical

Practical Catechism

PART II.

*Of the Feasts of Jesus Christ, and
other observances that attend them.*

SECTION I.

ADVENT.

Q. *WHEN* does Advent begin?

A. It begins on the Sunday which is nearest to the feast of St. Andrew whether before or after.

Q. *Why* are the four weeks before Christmas call'd Advent?

A. Because the Church during this time would have us to prepare for the worthy celebrating of our Saviour's Nativity.

Q. *How* is this preparation to be made?

A. By frequently acknowledging, how much we are in want of Jesus Christ, upon account of our weaknesses and transgressions. *Mat. i. 21.*

Q. *What effect* ought the due consideration of our sins and weaknesses to have upon us?

A. It should move us, as it does the Church, to sigh and long for Jesus Christ,

as the Patriarchs and Prophets did ; and earnestly to beg of him, that he would come and cure us. *Gen. xlv. 18. Exod. iv. 3, 13. Isa. xxxiii. 2.*

Q. Ought we not likewise frequently to direct our devotion to Jesus Christ in the womb of his blessed Mother ?

A. Yes. It should be our daily practice during this holy time, to join with the bless'd Virgin in acts of adoration, thanksgiving, humility, love, confidence, &c. to Jesus in that his retirement.

Q. Are more than ordinary diversions suitable to this time ?

A. They are directly contrary to the spirit of the Church.

Q. What is the spirit of the Church ?

A. As she desires that at the holy feast of Christmas Christ Jesus may be formed a-new in all her children by an increase of faith, charity and other virtues, she would have them in a more than usual retirement to apply themselves to prayer, penance and the consideration of divine truths, for the obtaining this grace.

Q. Why does the Church begin her instructions at this time, by representing to us the second coming of our Saviour to judge the world ?

*A. That the consideration of his justice upon unrepenting sinners, may move us to
a speedy*

a speedy and true conversion of our hearts to him, and to lay hold of his mercy, while time is offer'd us.

SECTION II.

Ember-days in Advent.

Q. *WHAT are we to ask of God for the ministers of his Church, that are ordain'd on Ember-Saturday?*

A. 1. That he would fill them with the spirit of St. John Baptist, which the Church so frequently proposes to the faithful during *Advent*. 2. That he would prepare them, as he did that Saint, with innocence, penance, and retirement for entering upon their functions. 3. That he would give them that humility, zeal, and courage, which hereafter may be needful for the discharge of their duties.

Q. *What's to be done as to the fruits of the earth?*

A. 1. We are to return our humble thanks for what has been gather'd this last year. 2. To beg his blessing upon the seed, that is newly sown.

SECTION III.

Christmas-Day. December 25.

Tit. ii. 11, 15.

Luke ii. 1, 14.

Tit. iii. 4, 7.

Luke ii. 15, 20.

Heb. i. 1, 12.

John i. 1, 14.

Q. *WHAT is the spirit of the Church on this solemnity?*

A. She would have us. 1. To adore our new born Saviour. 2. To pay him our best acknowledgments. 3. To learn the lessons he has given us in the circumstances of his Nativity.

Q. *What were the chief circumstances which accompanied his Nativity.*

A. 1. He was born upon the blessed Virgin's journey. 2. At midnight. 3. In *Bethlehem*. 4. In a stable. 5. In the severest season of the year. 6. He gave notice by his Angels of his birth to a company of poor shepherds, who came and ador'd him.

Q. *What does our Saviour teach us by these circumstances?*

A. 1. To be humble and obedient.

2. To look upon ourselves as travellers upon earth.

3. To

3. To love poverty and retirement.

4. To contemn honours, pleasures, riches, and not to busy ourselves in the vain pursuit of worldly conveniences.

5. To value sufferings, and to overcome our natural inclinations to a life of ease and sensuality.

6. The whole gospel in abstract.

Q. What is the sum or abstract of the gospel which our Saviour teaches us in his Nativity?

A. 'Tis all reduc'd to these three points.

1. That we are to love God. 2. To hate sin. 3. To fight against concupiscence.

Q. Why are three masses said on this solemnity?

A. To honour the three Nativities of the Son of God.

Q. What mean you by that?

A. I mean, 1. That Jesus Christ is born of his Father from all eternity. 2. Was born in time of the blessed Virgin Mary. 3. Is every day born spiritually in the souls of the just by grace.

Q. Which of these Nativities are we to honour at the first Mass?

A. His temporal Nativity of the blessed Virgin.

Q. How are we to assist at it?

A. In the spirit of the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph; with faith, joy, admiration; adoring

adoring the Word made flesh, as the light that shines in darkness, and that comes to enlighten the whole world ; imagining the altar to be the manger.

Q. What Nativity are we to celebrate at the second Mass ?

A. Christ's spiritual Nativity in the souls of the just.

Q. How are we to assist at it ?

A. We are, 1. To join with the Angels in their canticles of joy. 2. With the shepherds in adoring our Infant-God in the manger, as the sun of justice, that rises to direct our steps in the way of salvation. 3. To offer up our hearts, as a homage due to him.

Q. What canticle did the Angels sing ?

A. That which the Church so frequently repeats in the holy Mass, and which on this occasion should be said with a more than ordinary joy and tenderness.

Q. How has the Scripture expressed it ?

A. In these words, Gloria in excelsis Deo & in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis, that is, Glory be to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good will.

Q. Who made the rest of that canticle, as 'tis now said ?

A. The holy Fathers of the Church.

Q. What Nativity are we to celebrate at the third Mass ?

A. His

A. His divine Nativity, by which he is born of his heavenly Father, God of God, light of light, from all eternity.

Q. *How are we to assist at it?*

A. We are to join with the holy Quires of Angels, who adore the Son of God in heaven, who thank him for his benefits bestow'd on mankind, and who, as St. Paul assures us, paid their homage to him at the moment he was born into the world. *Heb. i. 6.*

Q. *Are all the faithful obliged to assist at these three masses?*

A. No. But it would be very commendable so to do.

Q. *What work of Piety is most suitable to this solemnity?*

A. There is nothing more conformable to the mystery of the day, than to cloath some poor child, or indigent person, or at least to give an alms in honour of him, who cloath'd himself with our miseries, and became poor to enrich us.

Q. *What are the abuses Christians ought chiefly to be caution'd against at this season?*

A. Intemperance, and a variety of other disorders which are the natural consequence of it, usher'd in under the pretence of joining with the Angels in the joyful celebration of our Saviour's Nativity.

Q. *But*

Q. But may not a more than ordinary relaxation be allow'd?

A. Yes, provided nothing be done that clashes with moderation, decency, innocence and order.

SECTION IV.

The Circumcision of Jesus Christ.
January 1.

Tit. ii. 11, 15.

Luke ii. 21.

Q. WHAT was Circumcision?

A. A sacrament of the old law which was given to male children, the 8th day from their birth.

Q. Why was it instituted?

A. To distinguish (as baptism does now) the people of God from the rest of mankind.

Q. When was it instituted?

A. When God made a covenant with Abraham. Gen. xvii. 10.

Q. What was intended by it?

A. 1. To signify that man's nature was corrupted by original sin. 2. To be a remedy for that sin.

Q. Was Christ then subject to the law of Circumcision?

A. Not

A. Not at all ; for he was sanctity it self.

Q. Why would he receive it ?

A. Because having taken upon himself the figure of sinful man, he was pleas'd to undergo the punishment due to our sins, and to expiate them with his blood. *Phil.*

ii. 7.

Q. What name was given him at his Circumcision ?

A. The name of *Jesus*.

Q. For what reason ?

A. The Angel had told the blessed Virgin and St. *Joseph*, that he was to be call'd *Jesus*, because he came to save us from our sins. *Matt.* i. 21. *Luke* i. 31.

Q. For what other reason ?

A. Because he that humbleth himself shall be exalted ; and therefore *Christ* having in a manner annihilated himself by becoming man, his Father bestow'd upon him this glorious name, at which the apostle says every knee shall bow. *Phil.* ii. 10.

Q. What does this holy name of *Jesus* require at our hands ?

A. It calls for our respect, love and confidence.

Q. What's to be done according to the spirit of the Church on this solemnity ?

A. 1. We are to pray for grace to comply with all the laws of God.

2. To thank God for glorifying his Son with the name of *Jesus*.

3. To beg pardon for the little or no good use we have made of that saving name, and for the many times we have profan'd it.

4. To say and meditate upon the *Litanies* of *Jesus*, for an increase of respect, love and confidence toward him.

5. To resolve on the spiritual Circumcision of our hearts.

Q. What mean you by a spiritual Circumcision?

A. I mean we are to follow the advice of *St. Paul*, in renouncing all impiety and worldly desires; to cut off all habitual sins with their occasions, and to live in a strict conformity to the rules of temperance, justice and piety, in expectation of the happiness we hope for in the world to come.
Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Jer. iv. 4. Rom. ii. 29. Col. ii. 11. Tit. ii. 12.

New-Years Day.

Q. This being likewise the first day of the new year, what are we to do upon that account?

A. We are to consecrate ourselves anew to God, our beginning and last end, by an *act of love*, and an oblation of all that we have and are.

Q. Ought

Q. Ought not this to have been done so soon as we attain'd the use of reason?

A. Yes. But because most persons are so unfortunate, as to have been at that time wanting to this duty; it highly concerns us now at least to make amends for that neglect.

Q. What are we to do beside?

A. We are 2dly to reflect on past years in the bitterness of our soul, and with sentiments of gratitude and repentance to make some holy resolutions of spending in a better manner the new year. Isa. xxxviii. 15, 16.

Q. By what means may we render our resolutions more effectual than hitherto they have been?

*A. By having no dependance on ourselves, but placing our whole confidence in the mercy of God, and the merits and promises of Jesus Christ; humbly and fervently begging his divine grace by saying the *Veni Creator*, or some such prayer: not forgetting daily to renew our good purposes in our Morning Prayer.*

SECTION V.

The Epiphany. January 6.

Isa. lx. 1, 7.

Matt. ii. 1, 13.

Q. *WHAT's the meaning of the word Epiphany?*

A. 'Tis a Greek word which signifies the same as *appearance* or *manifestation*.

Q. *Why is this feast so called?*

A. Because on this day we celebrate three great mysteries, whereby *Jesus Christ*, has manifested his glory to the world.

Q. *What three mysteries are they?*

A. 1. The adoration paid to our Saviour by the three *Wisemen*. 2. His baptism. 3. The miracle he wrought at the marriage of *Cana*, by changing water into wine. *Matt. ii. 1. iii. 13. John ii. 1.*

Q. *Who were the three Wisemen?*

A. Persons of note among the *Gentiles*.

Q. *Why did Christ call them?*

A. To shew the time was come of bringing the *Gentile* world to the knowledge of the true God.

Q. *How did he call them?*

A. By the appearance of a new star, and the help of an extraordinary revelation, which

which gave them to understand that the king of heaven and earth was born.

Q. Whither came they to adore him?

A. To Bethlehem, where he was born.

Q. How did they know he was born at Bethlehem?

A. They first went to Jerusalem, which was the chief city of Judea and the principal seat of the Jewish Church; and there they were inform'd by the Priests, that, according to the Prophets, the Messias was to be born at Bethlehem.

Q. Since God cou'd have guided them directly to Bethlehem, why did he first lead them by a star to Jerusalem?

A. Because he will have his servants to know the truth and the ways of salvation, and to go to Jesus Christ by the ministry of his Church. Isa. ii. 3. Mich. iv. 2. Act. ix. 7. x. 5, 6.

Q. Did the Priests, who inform'd the Wisemen, go along with them to Bethlehem?

A. They shew'd them the way to find Christ, without making any advantage of their knowledge for their own souls.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That when the ministers of God do not practice what they preach, we are nevertheless, in imitation of these Wisemen, to walk by the lights they give us, without heeding their example.

2. That

2. That a great many are backward in going to *Christ*, and in embracing his truths, bias'd by the consideration of interest, reputation, dependance, and variety of other private and human motives.

Q. What did the Wisemen do upon finding Jesus Christ?

A. They ador'd him; and made him an offering of *gold*, as to their king; of *incense* as to their God; of *myrrh* as to a mortal.

Q. What virtues do these offerings represent to us as an acceptable sacrifice to our blessed Saviour?

A. Charity, prayer and mortification.

Q. In what spirit are we to celebrate this feast?

A. 1. We are to thank God, for calling us out of his pure mercy, to the faith of *Christ*.

2. To adore *Jesus Christ* with these *Wisemen*, and to offer him a sacrifice of our goods, by alms; of our hearts, by prayer; and of our evil inclinations, by mortification.

3. To beg pardon for the many times we have neglected God's inspirations and follow'd the suggestions of interest, passion and self-love.

4. To resolve to follow courageously and readily the lights of faith, in spite of all worldly arguments to the contrary;
the

the directions of our spiritual guides, and the inspirations of almighty God ; begging grace so to do.

5. To pray for all that as yet sit in the darkness of vice, error or infidelity.

Q. Are prophane diversions suitable to the day ?

A. They are the inventions of the devil, for the shutting out of our souls those graces which a due observance of the festival wou'd procure us.

SECTION VI.

The hidden Life of Jesus Christ.

First Sunday after the Epiphany.

Rom. xii. 1—5.

Luke ii. 42—52.

Q. CAN you give me a short account of the wonders that happen'd in the beginning of our Saviour's life ?

A. The Angels praised God at his birth :
The shepherds ador'd him in the manger :
The *Wise men* brought presents to him :
And when he was presented in the temple he was acknowledg'd and glorified by holy *Simeon*, and by *Anne* a prophetess.

Q. What happen'd afterwards ?

A. Then

A. Then began his persecutions, and his parents were forc'd to carry him into *Egypt*, to avoid the malice of *Herod*, who design'd to murder him.

Q. Why was this divine infant to be persecuted from his cradle?

A. Because his portion on earth was no other than the cross.

Q. How came they to the knowledge of *Herod's* wicked design?

A. An Angel in a dream discover'd it to *St. Joseph*, and order'd him to fly into *Egypt*, out of *Herod's* territories. *Matt. ii. 13.*

Q. Why did the Infant *Jesus* draw these afflictions upon his parents?

A. Because he gives a share of his cross to those he loves.

Q. When did he return from *Egypt*?

A. After *Herod* was dead, *St. Joseph* had instructions from the Angel, to bring him into the land of *Israel*. *Matt. ii. 19.*

Q. Did he remain in *Judea*?

A. He did not, for fear of *Archelaus* the son of *Herod*, who inherited his father's evil intentions.

Q. So that the Divine Child had always enemies?

A. Yes great enemies; no less than kings.

Q. Where did he live after his return?

A. At *Nazareth* a little village of *Galilee*, with his parents.

Q. And

Q. And after these first days did nothing happen, that might convince the Jews of their Messias being come?

A. Nothing at all, till he was twelve years old.

Q. And what happen'd then?

A. Jesus being gone to Jerusalem in company of the blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, he secretly withdrew from them, and after three days was found by them in the temple. Luke ii. 42, &c.

Q. What did he there?

A. He was sitting amidst the Doctors, hearing them and asking them questions, and they were astonish'd at his wisdom and answers.

Q. What do you remark here?

A. That Jesus has given on this occasion a lesson to children, how they ought to put their difficulties, and to answer to their instructors.

Q. Why then was Jesus seated in the midst of the Doctors?

A. Because in effect he was their master, tho' he did not as yet exert all the authority of this his function.

Q. Why did he make his wisdom appear at the age of twelve?

A. To shew that his hidden life from that day forward, was his own choice.

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Q 'Till

Q. Till what age did he continue in his retirement?

A. Till about the age of 30, when he was pleas'd to be baptiz'd by his Precursor St. John. Luke iii. 23.

Q. What account have we of him as to all at t ime?

A. Only this, 1. That as he increas'd in age, he gave more remarkable instances of his wisdom. 2. That he was obedient to his mother and St. Joseph his suppos'd father. 3. That he work'd under St. Joseph, and pass'd in the opinion of his neighbours for a tradesman. Luke ii. 51, 52. Jo. vi. 42.

Q. At what trade did he work?

A. At the carpenters, as we are inform'd by tradition.

Q. Was this a calling becoming God incarnate?

A. Yes, for as much as it was for man's instruction.

Q. What instruction has he given us by this his life?

A. 1. That we are not to shew our selves to the world, till God orders us so to do. 2. That we are to love a life of secrecy, labour and poverty.

Q. And what further instructions has he given to children?

A. That their virtue and perfection chiefly

chiefly consists in obedience to parents and superiors. 2. That they ought to be at church and school, hearing their teachers, putting their doubts and difficulties to them, and answering to their questions.

Q. And when may this be practis'd?

A. At Catechism, where they are to hear and answer.

Q. May they also ask questions?

A. Yes, in order to learn, what they do not know.

Q. And what advantage will they reap thereby?

A. After the example of little *Jesus*, they'll increase in wisdom, as they grow in age.

*Q. Was not *Jesus* his wisdom perfect from his infancy?*

A. It was most certainly, but he gave daily more and more evidences of it, to teach children, how they ought constantly to advance.

*Q. How did the blessed *Virgin* live?*

A. A life no less retir'd than *Jesus Christ*.

Q. How did she employ her thoughts?

A. In meditating upon what *Jesus* did; and upon all that was said of him.

*Q. In what then consisted the sanctity of *Jesus* his family?*

A. In frequenting the temple at times appointed by the law; in obeying God

without reserve ; in doing their work and in retirement.

Q. And what does this teach us ?

A. That true sanctity does not consist in great and glorious actions, but in sanctifying our selves in our profession, with a great humility, and a perfect disengagement from this world.

Q. But why have the Evangelists given us so short an account of Jesus and his holy family ?

A. They have said enough, for our instruction ; and have said no more, to teach us not to be too curious.

Q. What use must we make of all they have written, or pass'd by in silence ?

A. We are to make our profit of what we know by their means ; and to humble ourselves, as to what is not written, or not understood.

SECTION VII.

*The Baptism of Jesus Christ, and his
changing of Water into Wine.*

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

Rom. xii. 6 — 16.

John ii. 1. — 11.

Q. *YOU told me the Church celebrated on
the Epiphany two other mysteries beside
that of the adoration of the Wisemen wherein
Christ manifested his Glory. Which are they?*

A. One of them is our Saviour's baptism.

Q. *When and by whom was he baptis'd?*

A. About the age of 30, by St. John the
Baptist. *Matt. iii. 13.*

Q. *What was signified by that baptism?*

A. Penance and remission of Sins.

Q. *Had Christ then any need of it?*

A. No, for he was sanctity itself. He
was pleas'd yet to receive it, that he might
bear the likeness of sin, which he came to
expiate; and likewise to consecrate the
water for the use of his more holy and ef-
fectual baptism.

Q. *What happen'd most remarkable at
our Saviour's baptism?*

E 3

A. 1. The

A. 1. The Holy Ghost descended upon *Jesus Christ* in the form of a dove, as a testimony of his meekness. *Matt.* iii. 16.

2. A voice was heard from heaven, saying, *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleas'd.* iii. 17.

Q. What did those wonders signify?

A. The union and manifestation of the three divine Persons in baptism.

Q. In what manner?

A. The Father manifested himself, in the voice; the Son in his own person; the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove.

Q. What's the other mystery that is commemorated on the Epiphany?

A. The changing of water into wine at the marriage of *Cana*, which is likewise read in the gospel on this Sunday. *Jo.* ii. &c.

Q. What was signified by this change?

A. The approaching change of the law of *Moses* into that of *Christ*?

Q. What's meant by the wine?

A. The spiritual joy and holy fervour, with which the children of God are animated, thro' the grace of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. How was *Christ* manifested by this miracle?

A. His disciples upon seeing this first miracle, believ'd in him, as *St. John* assures us. *Ch.* ii. 11.

Q. How are we to honour these mysteries?

A. By

A. By reflecting on our baptism, and renewing the promises we then made.

Q. *How is this to be done?*

A. By protesting that we will with all our hearts believe in *Jesus Christ*, and by renouncing all the pomps and works of the devil.

Q. *What is intended by the works and pomps of the devil?*

A. All vanities, and all the corruptions and false maxims of the world.

SECTION VIII.

Candlemas-Day. Feb. 2.

Mal. iii. 1 — 4.

Luke ii. 2 — 32.

Q. **WH** *AT* *feast is kept on the second of February?*

A. The feast of *Christ's* Presentation in the temple, and of the blessed Virgin's Purification.

Q. *Who was it that presented or offer'd Jesus Christ in the temple?*

A. The blessed Virgin his mother.

Q. *When was this Presentation made?*

A. On the 40th day from his Nativity, in compliance with the law of *Moses*, which order'd that the eldest son of each family of the *Israelites* should be carried on the 40th

E 4.

day

day to the temple, and there be consecrated to God, and then a ransom paid for him to the Priest. *Lev. xii. 6. Numb. xviii. 15.*

Q. Why did God make this law?

A. To put the *Jews* in mind, that when their forefathers were by him deliver'd out of *Egypt*, he kill'd the first born of the *Egyptians*, and sav'd theirs. *Exod. xiii. 2.*

Q. What did Jesus on this occasion?

A. He offer'd himself to his eternal Father, as the only victim capable to appease his anger, and reconcile him to mankind. *Heb. x. 5, 6.*

Q. Did any thing remarkable happen at the temple?

A. Yes, Jesus was acknowledg'd for the *Messias* by *Simeon* a venerable old man, and by *Anna*, a widow and a prophetess. *Luke ii. 25, 36.*

Q. What did Simeon?

A. He took Jesus into his arms, and in a rapture of joy spake a most divine canticle, which the Church daily makes use of for part of her night prayers.

Q. What was this Canticle?

A. 'Twas this. *Now let thy servant, O Lord! according to thy promise die in peace: For my Eyes have seen the Saviour of the world, whom thou hast sent to be the light of Nations and the glory of Israel thy people.*

Q. Why is this canticle inserted in Complin?

A. To

A. To put us in mind, that in order to prepare for death, we must contemn this world, and sigh after the possession of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. And what did *Anna the Prophetess*?

A. She spake of *Jesus Christ* to all that expected the redemption of *Israel*. *Luke ii. 38.*

Q. What mean you by the *Purification of the blessed Virgin*?

A. The *Purification* was a ceremony appointed by the law of *Moses*, which all women were to comply withal, on the 40th or 80th day from their delivery. *Lev. xii.*

Q. What was the meaning of this purification?

A. It was to acknowledge by an expiatory sacrifice the unhappy impurity of our birth since the sin of *Adam*.

Q. Did these laws oblige *Jesus and Mary*?

A. Not in the least. For *Jesus* was the Son of God; and the Virgin *Mary* conceiv'd of the holy Ghost, and was deliver'd of her only begotten, without prejudice to her virginal integrity.

Q. Why then did they submit to them?

A. Because as our Saviour's miraculous conception and birth were secrets, not as yet ripe for discovery, both the Mother and the Son were in the eye of the world, within the letter of the law.

Q. What may we learn from this instance?

A. Humility, a punctual obedience to the commands of God and his Church, and particularly to beware of sins of scandal.

Q. What sacrifice were women to offer at their Purification?

A. The rich offer'd a lamb; and the poor a pair of turtles or pigeons. Lev. xii. 6, 8.

Q. Why does the gospel mention only the turtles or pigeons?

A. Because *Mary* and *Joseph*, being poor, made their offering, as other poor people us'd to do.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. To love poverty, which makes us to resemble the family of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. How would the church have us sanctify this feast?

A. By contemplating, praying for and resolving to imitate the virtues of *Jesus*, *Mary*, *Simeon* and *Anna*.

Q. How are we to imitate Jesus Christ?

A. We are to offer ourselves with him, especially at the holy Mass, to his heavenly Father, for to do his will as obedient children, on all occasions.

Q. What do we learn of the blessed Virgin?

A. I. Humi-

A. 1. Humility, and not to value the opinion of men. 2. Obedience. 3. That we are to purify ourselves from all iniquity, and even from the least stain of sin, by the spirit of penance.

Q. *What do we learn of old Simeon ?*

A. Earnestly to aspire after *Jesus Christ* ; to follow him as our only light ; and to undervalue all the world beside.

Q. *And what from the prophetess Anna ?*

A. To love to converse with God in the church, as she did in the temple ; and to make *Jesus Christ*, the subject of our thoughts and words.

Q. *And what beside ?*

A. To believe and rejoice, to thank, admire and praise almighty God and his son *Jesus Christ*, as *Anna* and *Simeon* did.

Q. *What is further to be recommended to parents, who have children under their charge ?*

A. That they offer up their children to God, in union with the offering *Christ* made of himself, by the intercession of the blessed Virgin ; and teach such of them, as are capable, to make an offering of themselves.

Q. *But why is this feast call'd Candlemas-day ?*

A. 'Tis so call'd from the blessing and distributing of candles, which ceremony

was in use above twelve hundred years ago.

Q. Why are candles distributed to the faithful on this day?

A. To express the share they have in Simeon's holy joy, and that they believe Jesus Christ to be the light of the world.

Q. For what reasons does the Church bless candles and other inanimate things?

A. Because it is decent and fitting, that whatever things are set apart for the service of God, should be offer'd, and in a particular manner consecrated to him.

2. That God may give a particular blessing to such things as are thus consecrated to him, that those, who use them with faith in his name and power, may find his assistance against temporal and spiritual evils, and against the snares of the devil.

SECTION IX.

Septuagesima-Sunday, and the remaining Days 'till Lent.

Q. HOW does the Church call Shrove-Sunday?

A. She calls it *Quinquagesima*, because 'tis the fiftieth day from *Easter*.

Q. How is the foregoing Sunday call'd?

A. 'Tis

A. 'Tis call'd Sexagesima.

Q. And the Sunday before that ?

A. Septuagesima.

Q. What then is Septuagesima-Sunday ?

A. 'Tis the first of those days the Church has set apart for penance, in memory of Adam's sin, and in order to prepare the faithful for the duly keeping of Lent, and solemnizing of Easter, which is the most solemn of all her feasts.

Q. Is the spirit of God very different from the spirit of the world as to the spending of these days ?

A. As different as light from darkness.

Q. What effect has the spirit of the world on this occasion upon those that are led by it ?

A. Because Lent is approaching, which will put a restraint upon the methods of a sensual and carnal life; the men of the world endeavour to be beforehand with it, by abandoning themselves to all manner of diversions and excesses.

Q. What does the spirit of God and his Church require of us ?

A. To spend these days in sobriety, prayer and penance, and in discovering and subduing our vicious habits, that in Lent we may more seriously and sincerely do penance for them.

Q. How are you sure that this is the spirit of the Church ?

A. 'Tis

A. 'Tis evident from the instructions which during this time she proposes to her children, and from the prayers she makes for them ; as likewise from her cloathing her altars and priests in purple, which is her mourning ; and laying aside all her canticles of joy.

Q. *What then is her opinion of worldly diversions at this time ?*

A. She looks upon them, as so many cups of poison presented to her children by the enemy of their salvation, in order to prevent those spiritual advantages, which she intends they should receive by their devotions and mortifications during *Lent*.

Q. *What effect ought the consideration of the horrible abuses committed at this time, to have upon the hearts of pious Christians ?*

A. 1. It ought to carry them to the feet of *Jesus*, that there they may lament the condition of their sinful brethren, and implore the mercy of God upon them ; and by humble prayer and adoration may make some reparation and atonement for the many affronts he receives from them.

2. It should move them to use all the means, that zeal and prudence can inspire, to withdraw them from their sinful excesses.

S E C.

SECTION X.

L E N T.

Q. *W H E N* was the fast of Lent instituted?

A. 'Tis a fast of apostolical tradition, which in all ages has constantly been observ'd through the whole Church of God.

Q. *Why* was it instituted?

A. 1. To honour and imitate our Saviour's fast in the desert.

2. That the faithful might prepare themselves by prayer, penance and fasting for the duly celebrating the adorable mysteries of his Passion and Resurrection.

3. To consecrate to God by a penance of 40 days, the tenths of our lives, as an acknowledgment that our whole life ought to be so spent.

Q. *What other obligations* does Lent bring along with it?

A. It obliges us to a spiritual fast.

Q. *In what consists this spiritual fast?*

A. 1. In abstaining from sin and its immediate occasions, an obligation from which the Church never dispenses any one, and such occasions are gaming, balls, comedies, &c. in regard to a great part of mankind.

mankind. 2. In subduing our vicious habits and inclinations. 3. In retrenching and taking off somewhat from our sleep, conversation, recreations, and in short from every thing that is pleasing to our senses.

Q. This I understand to be the negative part of our duty; what is now the affirmative?

A. 1. To expiate and blot out our sins by tears proceeding from a love of God, and by worthy fruits of penance, and to prepare in time for a good confession.

2. To give alms.

3. To apply ourselves to prayer.

4. To nourish our souls by reading, hearing and meditating the word of God.

5. To make a spiritual harvest; that is to say, such a provision of virtues and graces, as may last us the whole year.

Q. What is chiefly to be recommended for the subject of spiritual reading and meditation?

A. The epistles and gospels, which the Church changes every day for our instruction. And 2dly, such subjects as may best help us to the subduing of our predominant imperfections, and the attaining of the virtues we most need.

Q. What prayers are most proper for the time?

A. The prayers and hymns of the Church;

Church, with the seven penitential psalms and litanies of the Saints.

Q. Why are Vespers said in Lent before dinner?

A. For a subject of humiliation to the Christians of this age, by reminding them, how far short they come of the austerities of past ages, when the faithful fasted 'till the evening.

SECTION XI.

Ash-Wednesday.

Joel ii. 12—19.

Mat. vi. 16—21.

Q. WHY is the first day of Lent call'd Ash-Wednesday?

A. From the ceremony of putting ashes upon the heads of the faithful.

Q. Whence had this ceremony its origin?

A. From the practice of the primitive Church; which she took up from the example of the *Ninivites*, recommended by our blessed Saviour. *Jon.* iii. 6. *Matt.* xi. 21.

Q. What was the custom of the primitive Church?

A. At the beginning of *Lent*, the bishop or his Penitentiary was us'd to cast ashes upon

upon sinners, that came in sack-cloth to the church to perform their penance, in hopes of being reconcil'd and absolv'd at the end of *Lent*.

Q. Why does the Church now use this ceremony upon all the faithful?

A. Because *Lent* is a time of publick penance for all without exception.

Q. What does the Church beg of God at the blessing of the ashes?

A. She begs for all her children the remission of their sins; and to that end, the spirit of compunction, and grace to employ, as they ought, the time of *Lent* in doing penance.

Q. What then are the faithful to do, during the blessing of the ashes?

A. They are to join with the Church, and to beg for themselves a contrite and humble heart (represented by the ashes) and that wholesome fear of God's judgments, which is the beginning of true wisdom and penance.

Q. What does the priest say in putting the ashes upon our foreheads?

A. He bids us to remember the sentence pronounc'd by almighty God upon *Adam* and his posterity, which is this: *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.* Gen. iii. 19.

Q. What's

Q. What's the intention of the Church in using these words?

A. 'Tis to excite her children to penance from the consideration of death, which is the punishment of sin.

Q. In what spirit then are the faithful to present themselves to receive the ashes?

A. With a profound humility, seriously reflecting that their bodies are but earth, and will by death be reduc'd to corruption and dust.

Q. And what are they to conclude from this reflection?

A. That by consequence this life is a meer vanity; and that the only true wisdom is to disengage ourselves from earthly things, to love and fear God, to keep his commandments, and by doing penance to prepare for death.

Q. What are we to pray for at the holy Mass?

A. That God would be pleas'd to preserve these sentiments in our hearts during *Lent*, and for the remainder of our lives.

SECTION XII.

Ember-Days in the first Week of Lent.

Q. *IS there any thing in particular to be observ'd as to these days?*

A. They being upon a double account assign'd to fasting and penance; our penance should be so much the more fervent and complete; our fasting the more severe; and our good works the more numerous.

Q. *What ought we chiefly to beg for such as are ordain'd at this time?*

A. The spirit of penance and compunction, which is necessary for those God has charg'd with the sins of the people, that they may frequently lament at the holy altar their own sins and those of their flock.

Q. *Why are the ministers of Christ call'd the Clergy?*

A. Because those who are devoted to the service of the altar, have always been esteem'd God's *lot* and *inheritance*, which the word signifies in the *Greek*: they at the same time making a solemn profession of taking the Lord for their *inheritance* and portion for ever. *Pf. xv. 5.*

SECTION XIII.

Second Sunday in Lent.

The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ.

I Theff. iv. 1—7.

Mat. xvii. 1—9.

Q. *WHEN* was our Saviour Transfigur'd?

A. His whole life upon earth was a miraculous *Transfiguration of humility*, whereby he cover'd and vail'd that glory which was due to him.

Q. *Is this the mystery the Church proposes to us this day?*

A. No. What she now proposes is that *Transfiguration of glory*, when *Jesus Christ*, some time before his passion, appear'd between *Moses* and *Elias* in glory upon mount *Thabor*, to *Peter*, *James* and *John*; his face shining as bright as the sun, and his cloaths as white as snow. *Mat. xvii. 2.*

Q. *Why would Jesus give his disciples this passing view of his glory?*

A. 1. To let them see how much he left for them, and what obligation they had to him.

2. To

2. To strengthen their weakness, and prevent the scandal they were like to take at the ignominies and humiliations of his passion.

3. To encourage them by the prospect of future glory, to suffer courageously the crosses and persecutions they were to meet with upon his account.

Q. Of what did our Saviour speak with Moses and Elias ?

A. Of his approaching passion. Luke ix. 31.

Q. What does this teach us ?

A. That amidst the greatest joys and prosperity of this life, death ought constantly to be before our eyes, as the necessary means and sacrifice, whereby we attain the joys of heaven.

Q. How were the three apostles affected with the sight of their Master's glory ?

A. So ravish'd they were with it, that St. Peter cryed out ; Lord ! 'tis good for us to continue here. But the gospel remarks, that he knew not what he said. Ver. 33.

Q. Why so ?

A. Because it is not for a disciple of Jesus Christ to think of arriving at rest and glory, any otherwise than by labour and suffering ; since to gain heaven we must merit it by the cross.

Q. What

Q. What happen'd beside, during Christ's Transfiguration?

A. A voice from heaven said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleas'd, hear ye him.* Matt. xvii. 5.

Q. What does this voice give us to understand?

A. That we cannot be acceptable to God the Father, but by attending to *Jesus Christ*, as our model and our Master.

Q. How does Jesus Christ speak to us?

A. Several ways, viz. by his life and death; by his mysteries and gospel; by his Church and servants; by his benefits, punishments and inspirations.

Q. What said our Saviour to his apostles, when he descended from the mount?

A. He forbid them to speak of what they had seen, 'till after his Resurrection. Matt. xvii. 9.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That such as are truly humble, will take care to speak as seldom and to as few as possible, of the extraordinary graces they receive of God.

2. That those are guilty of a *proud Transfiguration*, that are continually endeavouring to set in view whatever they take to be considerable in themselves; and at the same time to cover and disguise all their weaknesses and imperfections.

Q. And

Q. And what may we conclude from hence?

A. That the whole world is under a kind of *Transfiguration*, which will not be remov'd 'till the general Resurrection.

Q. How do you mean?

A. My meaning is, that at present we neither see the beauty of those regenerate souls, in whom God dwells by his charity and holy spirit; nor the dreadful deformity of such as are under the dominion of sin and the devil.

Q. How comes this to pass?

A. By reason that human frailties do cover the beauties of pious souls and so disfigure them in our eyes, that frequently the wicked seem as agreeable as the virtuous: on the other side, certain natural qualifications, and some advantages which we gain by the wicked, do so greatly keep out of sight the corruption of their hearts, that we are apt to set them upon a level with the virtuous.

Q. Since the Church has assign'd the 6th of August to the honour of this mystery, why does she make a commemoration of it at this time?

A. That the faithful by the contemplation of that glory which is to be the reward of their sufferings, may with fresh courage pursue the ways of penance, which they have begun.

Q. What

§. 14. *Saturday before Passion-Sunday.* 97

Q. What are we to beg of God on this occasion ?

A. 1. Those eyes of faith, whereby we may perfectly discover the hope of our vocation, and what those riches of glory are, which he hath design'd for the inheritance of the Saints. *Eph. i. 18.*

2. That he would shew us the beauty of that kingdom which he holds in pious souls, and the misery of a soul in sin ; that we may aspire after the former, and decline the latter. *Psal. xxxvi.*

SECTION XIV.

Saturday before Passion-Sunday.

Q. WHY take you notice of this Saturday ?

A. Because the Church has assign'd it for the ordination of her ministers.

Q. What then is the duty of this day ?

A. The faithful are to offer up their fasting and prayers to obtain worthy ministers of almighty God, who may approve themselves, after *Christ's* example, to be both Priests and Victims.

Q. How are you to pray that Priests may be likewise Victims ?

F

A. I

A. I mean, we are to beg grace for them, to live continually in a spirit of sacrifice, that on all occasions they may study and preach, and glory in nothing but *Christ* crucified; may be fasten'd with him to the cross; may rejoice in being crucified to the world and that the world is crucified to them.

SECTION XV.

Passion-Sunday.

Heb. ix. 11—14.

John viii. 46—59.

Q. WHY are the Crucifixes and Altar-pictures vail'd from this day forward?

A. To express the Churches deeper mourning for the passion and death of her spouse and Saviour.

Q. Is not the whole Lent dedicated to our Saviour's passion?

A. Yes. But because the Church has in a more particular manner consecrated the two last weeks to the honour of that mystery, therefore is this day call'd *Passion-Sunday*, and the week *Passion-week*.

Q. Are all other offices and instructions laid aside?

A. No.

A. No. But this week being design'd as a preparation for the next, the Church in every part of her office takes care to renew the memory of our Saviour's passion.

Q. What then ought the faithful to do in compliance with the Churches spirit?

A. They ought to let no day pass of these two weeks, without reading and meditating upon some part of our Saviour's passion.

Q. How may this be done?

A. By dividing all the circumstances of it into 14 parts, as so many subjects of meditation. As for example.

On Passion Sunday. We may consider *Jesus* entering in triumph into *Jerusalem*, in order to suffer for the sins of all the world.

On Monday. *Jesus* washing his apostles feet, even *Judas's* among the rest; and instituting the blessed Sacrament.

Tuesday. *Jesus* going into the garden of *Gethsemani*, praying there and sweating blood.

Wednesday. *Jesus* betray'd by *Judas*; seiz'd on by the Jews, and abandon'd by his disciples.

Thursday. *Jesus* examin'd by the High-Priest; receiving a blow on the ear; denied by *St. Peter*, and abus'd by the servants.

Friday. *Jesus* compar'd with, and postpon'd to, *Barabbas*; and scourg'd at the pillar.

F 2

Saturday

Saturday. *Jesus* crown'd with thorns, expos'd to the people ; and by them demanded to be crucified.

On Palm-Sunday. *Jesus* declar'd innocent by *Pilate*, and yet condemn'd as guilty, and loaded with the cross.

Monday in Holy-Week. *Jesus* carrying his cross up to *Calvary* ; there stript of his cloaths and nail'd to the cross.

Tuesday. *Jesus* hanging on the cross : blasphem'd by one of the thieves, and confess'd by the other.

Wednesday. *Jesus* despis'd by passengers : press'd to come down ; and praying for his persecutors and executioners.

Thursday. *Jesus* recommending his blessed mother and *St. John* to each other ; suffering thirst ; and having gall and vinegar given him to drink.

Friday. *Jesus* abandon'd by his Father ; expiring on the cross ; and receiving the wound in his side.

Saturday. *Jesus* taken down from the cross ; and laid in the sepulchre.

SECTION XVI.

Holy-Week.

Q. *WHY* is the last week in Lent call'd Holy week ?

A. By

A. By reason that the great mystery of our redemption was compleated in it.

Q. *How should we bestow ourselves and our time during this week?*

A. We ought, 1. To fast more regularly, if we are able. 2. To pray more frequently. 3. To be more retired. 4. To enliven our affections towards our suffering Redeemer. 5. To assist at the Church-offices. 6. To dispose ourselves for the well receiving of the sacraments of Penance and the holy Eucharist.

SECTION XVII.

Annual Confession.

Q. WHAT obligation does the Church lay upon us as to confession?

A. To confess our sins at least once a year.

Q. Why has she laid this obligation on us?

A. That we may not live in sin, but may take care to convert ourselves to God.

Q. Are children under this obligation?

A. All children, that are come to years of discretion, and capable of sinning mortally, are oblig'd to confess.

Q. When may a child be thought to be come to years of discretion?

F

A. When

A. When he can distinguish betwixt good and bad; will blush at a lye, will commend obedience, discommend disobedience and disrespect to parents, and the like.

Q. But what if children have been so ill educated, as to be capable of sinning mortally and be not yet dispos'd nor prepar'd to go to confession?

A. Parents, pastors and superiors must take care to instruct and prepare them as soon as possibly they can.

Q. What sin is it wilfully to transgress this command of the Church?

A. A mortal sin. For, *If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen or a publican;* says our Saviour. *Matth. xviii. 17.*

Q. What persons sin against this precept?

A. They that pass twelve whole months without making one valid and good confession.

Q. But in case I have already been one whole twelvemonth without making a good confession, and have therefore committed a mortal sin by my disobedience to the Church; may I not defer some months still, without incurring the guilt of a new sin?

A. No. Such a person will be under a strict obligation of confessing with all speed.

Q. Should we not confess more than once a year?

A. Most

A. Most certainly we should.

Q. *Why so?*

A. Because 'tis clear from experience, that such as confess not oftner, don't live as Christians ought to do ; and therefore the Church exhorts us to frequent confession.

Q. *What rule may be given as to the frequency of confession?*

A. There can be no general rule that will fit all persons, save only this ; that each one is in this matter to follow the advice of a good confessor.

Q. *May we not sometimes be oblig'd to go to confession, notwithstanding we have comply'd with the Churches precept of annual confession?*

A. Yes. For in all probable dangers of death we are oblig'd to make a confession, if a confessor can be had.

Q. *Who may be said to be in probable danger of death, and therefore oblig'd to confess?*

A. 1. Persons that by reason of sickness seem to be drawing to their end.

2. Soldiers that are about to engage in a siege or battle.

3. Such as are going upon a dangerous voyage.

4. Women that are nigh their time of being deliver'd of their first child ; as also afterwards on the like occasions, if they have found themselves to be in danger.

SECTION XVIII.

Paschal Communion.

Q. *WHAT does the Church command as to the receiving of the holy communion?*

A. To receive once a year, and that at *Easter*; That is to say, on some one of the fifteen days between *Palm-Sunday* and *Low-Sunday*.

Q. *At what age are children oblig'd to communicate?*

A. As soon as the pastors judge them to have sufficient discretion, and that they are so well instructed, as to be capable of profiting by it.

Q. *Does one satisfy this duty of Easter by a sacrilegious communion?*

A. By no means. On the contrary one incurs the guilt of a double sin, by violating both the law of *Christ* and the law of the church.

Q. *What if a person foresees, that in all probability, by reason of some necessary voyage or journey, he shall not have the opportunity of communicating within the fifteen days?*

A. In such a case he is oblig'd to communicate before his journey or voyage, in order to satisfy his *Easter* duty.

Q. *What*

Q. What if one has neither communicated at Easter, nor before it, for to satisfy his paschal duty?

A. He must communicate as soon as he can afterwards.

Q. Are all, that desire to communicate, immediately to be admitted?

A. No. The Church orders confessors to defer the paschal communion of such as are not in their judgment sufficiently dispos'd.

Q. What ought the penitent to do, whose communion is defer'd?

A. He ought to dispose himself for it, by an intire conversion of his heart to God, and by doing worthy fruits of penance.

Q. Why has not the Church determin'd these 15 days for the annual confession, as well as for annual communion?

A. Because she knows that a great many Christians stand in need of a longer preparation for their Easter communion: and for that reason she desires they would confess at the beginning of Lent, or sooner, in order to fit themselves for the discharging of their Easter duty.

Q. What punishment does the Church threaten to pronounce against those that are wanting to this duty?

A. To exclude them from the house of prayer, during life; and when they die, to give them no Christian burial.

Q. Ought Christians to content themselves with communicating once a year ?

A. To correspond with the Churches spirit and desire, Christians ought to live in so pious a manner, as to be qualify'd for a frequent use of this sacrament of love. Conc. Trid. Sess. xiii. Ch. viii.

Q. Is it adviseable to communicate more than once within the term of the fifteen days ?

A. As for such persons, as make their salvation the earnest business of their life, they would do well to celebrate apart by different communions. 1. The institution of the holy sacrament. 2. The passion of our Saviour. 3. His Resurrection.

Q. What advice do you give them that have formerly made their first communion at Easter ?

A. To sanctify the anniversary day of that great action by a more than ordinary devotion, and by communicating, if they can : renewing with all the vigour of their souls, their first fervour ; repairing all past defects ; and pouring forth their souls in acts of gratitude.

S E C.



SECTION XIX.

Palm-Sunday.

Ex. xv. 27—xvi. 6. Mat. xxi. 1—10.

Phil. ii. 5—11. Mat. xxvi. —xxviii.

Q. *WHY is the last Sunday in Lent call'd Palm-Sunday?*

A. From the ceremony of blessing Palm-branches, and the distributing them to the faithful; who carry them in their hands during the procession, which is made in Catholick Countries.

Q. *What's intended by this ceremony?*

A. To celebrate the triumphant entry of *Jesus Christ* into *Jerusalem*, six days before his passion.

Q. *What were the circumstances of his triumph?*

A. He was pleas'd to make his entry upon an ass; the common people and children went to meet him, and strew'd the way, he was to pass, with boughs and their own garments; and carrying branches in their hands accompanied him with joyful acclamations.

Q. *What was the meaning of this triumph of our Saviour, such a little time before his death?*

F 6

A. To

A. To intimate that by his death he would triumph over the devil the world and the flesh, and open heaven to us.

Q. *Why would he make his entry upon an ass?*

A. 1. To shew how much he contemn'd all human greatness, and to teach us to do the same.

2. To fulfill an eminent prophecy, which had some ages before pointed out the *Messias* by such an approach to *Jerusalem*. *Zach. ix. 9. Mat. xxi. 5.*

Q. *Did any persons of learning, power or riches go to meet Jesus?*

A. None at all that we read of.

Q. *What do you learn from this their neglect?*

A. That neither learning does usually dispose men to an obedience of faith, nor riches, to a love of poverty, nor honours, to humility; and that by consequence they are not to be coveted by the true disciples of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. *What does the peoples covering the way with branches and with their garments, intimate to us?*

A. That all worldly conveniences and pretensions are to be thrown away and trampled upon; to the end that *Christ* may reign and triumph in our hearts.

Q. *What*

Q. What learn you from their joyful acclamations?

A. That God accepts of the simplicity and praises of innocent souls.

Q. Did the people continue long in these pious sentiments?

A. No. Tho' they applauded *Christ* at his entry, as the Son of God and the world's *Messias*; within a few days they turn'd against him, postpon'd him to *Barabbas*, and cry'd out, *Crucify him, Crucify him.*

Q. What does this teach us?

A. 1. That we are not to depend upon worldly applause;

2. Nor upon that sensible devotion or zeal for truth, which may appear in us in time of peace and security.

3. That we are constantly to implore God's strengthening grace, lest we desert his cause, when it brings us into dangers.

Q. What is the spirit of the Church as to this solemnity?

A. She would have us, 1. To consider *Jesus Christ* triumphing over the devil, sin, and death.

2. To take part in his triumph by submitting to his reign, and giving him entrance into our hearts.

3. That we entertain our minds with these thoughts at the blessing of the palms, and during the rest of the office.

S E C.

SECTION XX.

The Office of Tenebræ.

Q. *WHY is the office which is perform'd on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday in the afternoon call'd Tenebræ?*

A. Because in ancient times it was perform'd at midnight; and the latin word *Tenebræ* signifies darkness or dark night.

Q. *What mean the fifteen candles that are set upon a triangular candlestick?*

A. The highest of them represents *Jesus Christ*, who says of himself, *I am the light of the world.* (Jo. viii. 12.) And the rest represent his apostles and disciples, to whom he was pleas'd to communicate his own prerogative of being *the light of the world.* Mat. v. 14.

Q. *Why are these candles successively extinguish'd during the office?*

A. To represent how the apostles fled and disappear'd at the time of our Saviour's passion.

Q. *For what reason at the end of the office, is the lamp put out; and the candle which represents our Saviour, hid under the altar?*

A. To express our Saviour's death and passion.

Q. *Why*

Q. Why are these candles plac'd upon a triangular candlestick?

A. A triangular figure is commonly made use of to represent the most blessed Trinity; and therefore the setting of the candles upon such a candlestick, is to give us to understand, that the light of truth, which shin'd to the world from the life and doctrine of *Christ* and his disciples, was deriv'd from the same blessed Trinity, and was intended to proclaim God's glory.

Q. What means the noise made, after some silence, at the end of the office?

A. The silence signifies the horror of our Saviour's death; and the noise, the splitting of the rocks and the confusion the world was in at that time.

SECTION XXI.

Maundy-Thursdai.

1 Cor. xi. 20—32.

Joh. xiii. 1—15.

Q. WHY is the last Thursday in Lent call'd Maundy-Thursdai?

A. It is so call'd from those words of our Saviour *Mandatum novum do vobis, &c. I give you a new command (or Mandate) that you love one another as I have lov'd you (Joh. xiii. 14.)*
which

which to day are sung in the churches, when the prelates begin the ceremony of washing the people's feet, in imitation of *Christ's* washing the apostle's feet before he instituted the blessed Sacrament.

Q. When did our Saviour institute the blessed Sacrament?

A. On *Thursd^y* in the evening, which was the day before his passion.

Q. What did he after that sacred institution?

A. He made a most divine sermon, set down by *St. John*, which he intended for all Christians, as well as his apostles. *Ch. xiii. xiv. xv. and xvi.*

Q. How did he conclude his sermon?

A. With a prayer for himself, for his apostles, and for all the faithful. *Jo. xvii.*

Q. And his prayer being ended what did he then do?

A. He went with his apostles into the garden of *Gethsemani* near *Mount Olivet*; where taking *Peter*, *James* and *John* apart and exhorting them all to arm themselves with watchfulness and prayer against the approaching danger, he, at a distance from the three, fell to prayer.

Q. What happen'd during his prayer?

A. Having charg'd himself with our sins, he was pleas'd to undergo the humiliation and punishment due to them; and there-
fore

fore he suffer'd so deep a sorrow to seize upon his human nature, that he fell into a bloody agony.

Q. Did the apostles watch and pray the mean while?

A. No. They fell asleep.

Q. What did Christ when he had ended his prayer?

A. He went to meet Judas and the Jews; suffer'd Judas to betray him with a kiss; the Jews to seize and bind him, and to drag him as a criminal to the house of Cai-phas the High-Priest.

Q. Did the apostles follow him?

A. They all fled from him. But afterwards St. Peter, reflecting probably on his late resolution of not leaving him, follow'd at a distance to the High-Priest's house.

Q. What treatment did our blessed Saviour meet withal?

A. He suffer'd from the High-Priest, his council and his servants; and from St. Peter.

Q. What did he suffer from the High-Priest and his council?

A. He was examined by them concerning his doctrine and disciples, as if he had been a factious and seditious man; and, because he profess'd himself the Messias, he was condemned as guilty of death.

Q. What

Q. What did he suffer from the High-Priest's servants?

A. One of them struck him, while he was examin'd; and as soon as *Caiphas* and his council had declar'd him guilty, they spit in his face, buffeted him, and loaded him with all manner of injuries.

Q. What did he suffer from St. Peter?

A. He was thrice denied by him.

Q. How would you advise Christians to spend this day?

A. 1. By a devout communion to commemorate *Christ's* love to us in the institution of the blessed Sacrament, and in his passion.

2. At some hour before dinner, to read or hear with the attention and spirit of the holy apostles, the sermon and prayer of our Saviour. *Joh. xiii. &c.*

3. In the evening to accompany him with their best affections in his agony and in his way to the house of *Caiphas*.

4. To dedicate some hour of the night to the contemplating of all he suffer'd the night before his passion from *Caiphas*, his council and his servants, and from *St. Peter*.

Q. Why are no bells rung from Thursday to Saturday, in Catholick Countries?

A. To express the deep sorrow, the Church is in for the death of her spouse.

Q. Why are the altars uncover'd?

A. To

A. To put us in mind how *Jesus*, whom the altar represents, was stript of his garments at the time of his passion. And therefore, while the Priest uncovers them, he says the 21st *Psal*m, which is a clear prediction of our Saviour's passion.

Q. *Why do the faithful visit Churches to-day and on Good-Friday?*

A. For a more lively commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings, while they accompany him in spirit thro' all his stations from the garden to *Calvary*.

Q. *Why is the blessed Sacrament reserved for to-morrow?*

A. For the Priest's communion, there being no Mass to be said on *Good-Friday*.

Q. *Why so?*

A. Because the Church looks upon the celebration of Mass, as a ceremony of joy; whereas on *Good-Friday* she is all in mourning for her Saviour's death, and for the sins of her children that occasion'd it.

SECTION XXII.

Good-Friday.

Of. vi. 1—6. } Jo. xvii. 1. to c. xx.
Ex. xii. 1—11. }

Q. *WHY is the last Friday in Lent call'd Good-Friday?*

A. Because on that day the Church keeps a solemn memorial of the infinite mercy and goodness God shew'd to man in the death of his beloved Son.

Q. *What became of our Saviour on Friday morning?*

A. He was led bound to *Pilate*, and there falsely accus'd of raising seditions, forbidding tribute to be paid to *Cæsar* and of aspiring to be king.

Q. *What did Pilate do?*

A. *Pilate* finding him innocent, and yet fearing to offend the *Jews*, sent him to *Herod*, who cloath'd him in derision in a white garment and so sent him back to *Pilate*.

Q. *How was Jesus treated at his return?*

A. He was postpon'd to *Barabbas* a thief and a murderer, and order'd to be scourg'd, which was most unmercifully executed.

Q. *Did*

Q. Did not the soldiers do more than they were order'd to do?

A. Yes. After they had whipp'd him in a barbarous manner, they threw over his torn and bloody body a purple cloak, press'd upon his sacred head a crown of thorns, put a reed in his hand for a scepter, and then striking him on his head and face, they in scorn bent the knee before him, saying, Hail King of the Jews.

Q. What follow'd after this barbarity?

A. Pilate, in order to appease the Jews, shew'd them Jesus in this condition, saying, Behold the man. But for fear of incensing them who had told him he was no friend to Cæsar, if he absolv'd Jesus; he deliver'd him to be crucified: and immediately Jesus was loaded with a heavy cross, and led in the company of two thieves to Calvary.

Q. At what time of the day was Christ crucified?

A. About noon; when began a miraculous eclipse of the sun, which lasted for three hours.

Q. What did the Jews who were spectators of this tragedy?

A. They revil'd and scoff'd at Jesus.

Q. What did Jesus upon the Cross?

A. 1. He pray'd for his enemies saying, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

2. H

2. He said to the good thief, *This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*;

3. To the *blessed Virgin*, in favour of St. John, *Behold thy Son*; and then to St. John, *Behold thy Mother*;

4. To his Father, *My God, my God, why hast thou abandon'd me.*

5. He express'd the thirst he suffer'd.

6. He said to his Father, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*

7. He said, *It is consummated or finished*; and then expir'd.

Q. *What wonders happen'd at his death, beside the darknefs afore-mentioned?*

A. The vail of the temple was rent; the earth trembled; rocks were split; graves open'd; and several, that were dead, rose and appear'd.

Q. *What was the vail of the temple?*

A. A sort of curtain, which separated the Sanctuary from the rest of the temple.

Q. *What was signify'd by the rending of the vail?*

A. 1. That the Sacraments and Figures of the old Law, understood by so very few that liv'd under it, were now *unvail'd* and fulfill'd by the death of Christ. S. Leo. Ser. 8. *de Pass.*

2. That heaven, the true sanctuary, where the majesty of God resides, was open'd to us by the death of Jesus Christ.

Q. *Why*

Q. Why did God work so many wonders at the death of his Son?

A. As a testimony against the Jews and against us too, if we do not profit by his death.

Q. What did those do, that profited by his death?

A. They return'd striking their breasts, and saying, This man was truly the Son of God.

Q. What was done to our Saviour after he had expir'd?

A. A soldier pierc'd his side with a lance; and immediately from the wound came water and blood.

Q. What was signified by this water and blood?

A. The sacrament of baptism in which the Church is wash'd in water by the blood of her Saviour.

Q. How was Jesus buried?

A. In the evening, Joseph of Arimathea a nobleman, and Nicodemus a Pharisee that fear'd God, having taken the sacred body down from the cross, wrapt it in fine linnen; and with perfumes laid it in a new sepulchre, that was cut in a rock.

Q. How are we to spend this day?

A. Besides what has been said above; to render ourselves agreeable to Christ crucified, we ought to be glad of any opportunity of

of suffering somewhat for his sake; of pardoning an injury; of remitting some debt to such as are indigent; of giving alms; of visiting the poor, the sick or imprison'd; or of comforting the afflicted.

Q. Why has the Church instituted the ceremony of creeping to the cross?

A. To express how, with St. Paul, she glories in the cross of Christ. Gal. vi. 14.

Q. What would she have us do, during this ceremony?

A. She would have us, in prostrating and kneeling before the cross, to adore Jesus Christ, who died upon it for our sakes.

Q. Are we not to adore the cross itself?

A. If by adoring be meant that supreme worship which is due to God alone, neither the cross nor any creature whatever is to be adored.

Q. Why then in the office of the day, is it said, Tuam crucem adoramus Domine, We adore thy cross, O Lord?

A. The latin word *Adore*, as likewise the Greek and Hebrew words which answer it, are of a larger acceptation, than the word *adoration* seems by common usage to be in English,

Q. How do you prove it?

A. From Scripture, where those words often import no more than *prostration*, or an outward reverence that may be exhibited

exhibited to creatures; as 'tis said of *Abraham*, that *Adoravit filios Heth*; *He adored*, that is he fell prostrate before, *the sons of Heth*. It is not therefore by the bare words we are to judge of the Church's faith, but by the sense in which she takes them.

SECTION XXIII.

Easter Eve.

Col. iii. 1—4.

Mat. xxviii. 1—7.

Q. *WHAT is the spirit of the Church as to this day?*

A. She continues her mourning and contemplates *Jesus* dead and lying in his sepulchre, 'till *None* is said.

Q. *How does she then apply herself?*

A. She then begins to celebrate the joyful festival of *Easter* with an office, which was heretofore perform'd the night following.

Q. *Why on this day is the fire blessed?*

A. It was the custom of the primitive Church to bless it, as often as it was used for the lighting of the candles; it being her general practice to bless what she makes use of in her Publick Service. See the reasons page 84.

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Q. *Why*

Q. Why is the custom retain'd for this day in particular?

A. To represent Jesus Christ the light of the world extinguish'd by his death, and shining again by his Resurrection.

Q. What means the Paschal candle?

A. It represents Christ risen from the dead.

Q. Why are five grains of incense put into five holes of the candle?

A. The five holes represent our Saviours five wounds: And the incense, the piety of Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, &c. who embalmed his body.

Q. What is the substance of the prayer, that's said for the blessing of the candle?

A. The Church by her Minister first publishes the enestimable benefit of our Redemption in the mysteries of Christ's death and Resurrection; then she exhorts the faithful to celebrate the same with due devotion. And afterwards having presented to God and lighted the candle, she prays for all her children, and begs grace for them to spend well their Easter.

Q. Why is water for baptism bless'd to-day and on Whitfun-Eve?

A. Because these two days were formerly set apart for the solemn administration of that sacrament.

Q. Why

Q. Why are so many prophecies or lessons read before the blessing of the baptismal font?

A. They are a summary of religion, and were read for the instruction of such as were to be baptiz'd.

Q. Why is Alleluia so frequently repeated in the Mass?

A. Alleluia signifies, Praise ye the Lord: And the church reassumes it to-day, to express her joy for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Q. What are the faithful to do at the blessing of the Paschal candle?

A. To adore Christ risen from the dead, and to join in prayer with the Church for all her children.

Q. What during the prophecies?

A. To read or attend to them, if one understands the Church's language; or at least to make acts of faith concerning this and all other mysteries, which effectually do all depend upon this.

Q. At the blessing of the font or baptismal water?

A. 1. To give God thanks for having made us members of his Church by baptism.

2. To renew the promises we then made, of renouncing the Devil, and all his pomps and works.

SECTION XXIV.

Easter-Day.

I Cor. v. 7—8.

Mark xvi. 1—7.

Q. *WHY is the feast of Easter call'd the Christians passover?*

A. For the relation it has to the Jewish.

Q. *What was the Jewish passover?*

A. A feast in memory. 1. Of the *passage* of the Angel that destroy'd the first born of the *Egyptians*, and sav'd those of the *Israelites*. 2. Of their *passage* out of *Egypt*, and their deliverance from the slavery of *Pharaoh*.

Q. *Wherein consists the relation between our passover and that of the Jews?*

A. In this, that *Jesus Christ* at his Resurrection pass'd from death to life by reuniting his glorious body to his soul; and by this *passage* triumph'd over the powers of hell; rescued us from their tyranny and from eternal death; and open'd a *passage* for us to a life eternal.

Q. *Why is this feast kept with so much solemnity?*

A. Because *Christ* by his Resurrection compleated the work of our Redemption.

Q. *What's*

Q. What's requir'd for a due celebration of it?

A. 1. That with sentiments of joy and gratitude we adore *Jesus Christ* in his immortal state. (*Psal. viii. 64, 65.*) 2. That we rise with him. *Col. iii. 1.*

Q. What is it to rise with Christ?

A. 'Tis to enter as he did, upon a new life; so as never to die more, by relapsing into sin. *Rom. vi. 4, &c.*

Q. In what consists this new life?

A. In renouncing all sin, and in living for the future to God alone.

Q. How may we know whether we have renounced sin or no?

A. 1. By our aversion to it. 2. By our care in shunning its occasions and using proper means for the breaking of ill habits. 3. By our practice of the opposite virtues.

Q. When may we be said to live to God alone?

A. When we condemn, what the world most admires and hunts after, as honours, pleasures, riches and vain dresses; and that we relish nothing but the goods of heaven.

Q. What is it to have a relish for the goods of heaven?

A. 'Tis to love God and whatever leads us to him; as prayer, spiritual reading, hearing the word of God, assisting at

Divine Service ; and, in short, all the exercises of a solid piety.

Q. What virtues ought we principally to exercise on this feast ?

A. Faith, hope, and charity.

Q. What motives are there, that may excite us to acts of faith ?

A. Christ has given us undeniable proofs of his Resurrection : His Resurrection bears evidence to his Divinity ; and by consequence to all the truths and maxims and promises of his gospel.

Q. What motives of hope ?

A. Our head being risen, 'tis to be hop'd, that we, his members, shall be one day united to him in glory ; provided that we now resemble him in his life, by an imitation of his virtues, and in his death, by the mortification of our senses and our passions.

Q. What motives of charity ?

A. It will enflame our love, to consider that Christ, as he died for our sins, so he rose again for our justification. Rom. iv. 25.

Q. Are Monday and Tuesday in Easter-week, holy days of obligation ?

A. Yes. There's an obligation of sanctifying them, as a part of one and the same solemnity with Easter-day. And formerly the whole week was kept holy.

Q. Why

Q. Why does the Church in the office of this week put us daily in mind of our baptism?

A. That we may not forget thro' the whole octave, 1. To thank God for having regenerated us by *Jesus Christ*, out of his pure mercy. 2. To humble ourselves for the little care we have taken to preserve our baptismal innocence. 3. To renew the promises we made at baptism, of renouncing the devil, and of following *Christ*.

Q. Did not the primitive Christians during the Paschal Time (or from Easter to the Ascension) pray standing?

A. Yes. As also on all *Sundays* throughout the year, in testimony of their joy for our Saviour's Resurrection, and for their own from-sin by his grace; both symbolically represented by that posture: a custom observ'd in the Quire to this day.

Q. Why is the first Sunday after Easter call'd Low-Sunday?

A. Because 'tis the lowest or latest day, that's allow'd for the satisfying of our *Easter* obligation, viz. The worthily receiving the blessed Sacrament.

SECTION XXV.

The three Rogation-Days.

Q. *W* H E N do those occur ?

A. They are always the *Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday* immediately before the Ascension.

Q. *W* h y are they call'd Rogation-days ?

A. From the extraordinary publick prayers and supplications offer'd to God by the Church at this season, to avert those judgments our sins may have deserved.

Q. *W* h e n were they establiſhed ?

A. They are suggested and advis'd by *St. Paul* (1 *Tim.* ii. 1.) But this season before our Lord's Ascension was appointed for them by *S. Mamertus*, bishop of *Vienna* in the 5th Century ; and the success that attended them induced the Church to make them of general observance, to move God to bless the fruits with which the earth is at this time cover'd, &c.

Q. *W* h a t other reason may be assign'd for placing them immediately before the Ascension ?

A. To intimate, as it were, that *Christ* being about to ascend to heaven, the Church commends to him all her vows and wishes

as

as the only Mediator between God and man.

Q. Are they fasting days?

A. No. They are only days of abstinence. For the Church during the Paschal Time did not anciently allow of strict fasting, as not suitable to a time of joy.

Q. What is to be our intention in our prayers and abstinence on these days?

A. To obtain of God, 1. The remission of our sins. 2. Grace to serve him. 3. The blessings of peace and plenty.

Q. Are the faithful on these days oblig'd to assist at Mass and Litanies?

A. Tho' there be not the same obligation of assisting at Divine Service on these days as on holy-days; yet persons can have but little reason to look for any share in the blessings of almighty God, who will not join with the rest of his children in praying for them.

SECTION XXVI.

Ascension-Day.

Acts i. 1—11.

Mark xvi. 14—20.

Q. WHY did our Saviour converse with his apostles for the space of forty days after his Resurrection?

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A. I. To

A. 1. To prove the truth of his Resurrection. 2. To recruit his apostles courage. 3. To cure their unbelief. 4. To give them all the instruction necessary for the preaching of his gospel.

Q. Where was Christ during these forty days, when he did not actually appear to his disciples?

A. It is not for us to enquire after what God has not been pleas'd to reveal.

Q. On the fortieth day what did he do?

A. Appearing to his disciples he assur'd them, he was invested with all power in heaven and earth, and therefore commanded them to teach and baptize all nations: He promised them and their converts the gift of miracles; and that he would be with his church to the end of the world. *Matt.* xxviii. 18, 19, 20. *Mark* xvi. 17.

Q. What did he promise them beside?

A. That he would send down upon them the holy Ghost; ordering them to continue in Jerusalem, 'till they had received him. *Luke* xxiv. 49. *Acts* i. 8.

Q. What follow'd?

A. He then led them to that part of Mount Olivet, which from being nearest to Bethania, went under the same name, and was about a mile from Jerusalem; here, while he gave them his blessing, he rais'd himself from earth towards heaven; and

and at last a cloud took him out of their sight. *Luke xxiv. 50, 51.*

Q. And what happen'd then?

A. While the apostles and other disciples stood gazing up to heaven, two Angels in the shape of men, and in white apparel, came and inform'd them that *Jesus* would one day return in the same visible manner he had ascended. *Acts i. 10.*

Q. Did the ancients pay any reverence to the place from whence he ascended?

A. *St. Augustin* assures us that the people went to *Judea* to worship the footsteps which remained on the spot of earth on which our blessed Saviour last set his feet. *Hom. xlvii. in Joan.*

Q. How long did these footsteps remain?

A. They were visible at the end of the 4th century, notwithstanding the faithful out of devotion were continually carrying away some of the earth on which the impression had been left. *Hier. vel Author de locis sanctis. Sulp. Sev. L. ii. c. xlviii. Paulin. Ep. xi. Venerable Bede (De locis sanctis)* says they were still to be seen in the 8th Century. And, *S. Frq. of Sales (Amour de Dieu L. vii. c. xii.)* gives a most admirable account out of *S. Bernardin*, of *Sienna*, of a person of quality that having visited all the holy places of *Palestine*, died with a transport of love after he had reverenc'd the said footsteps. *Q. What*

Q. What is our duty to Christ as he is seated at the right hand of his Father?

A. 1. Frequently and more especially on this feast to adore him, as doing there for us the function of Mediator, Advocate and Priest, and rejoice in his glory. *Heb.* ix. 15, 24. 1 *Jo.* ii. 2. *Psalms* xvi.

2. To beg a share in that blessing he gave this day to his apostles.

3. To encourage ourselves to serve God faithfully in prospect of heaven, which our Lord open'd to us on this day.

4. To live in a continual expectation of the Son of God's return to us. *Jo.* xiv.

3. 1 *Thess.* i. 10. *Tit.* ii. 13. *Luke* xii. 36.

5. To despise earth with all its vanities, as a place of banishment; and to raise our hearts to heaven our country, where *Christ* as our Precursor, enter'd on this day. *Jo.* xiv. 2. *Heb.* vi. 20. ix. 24. xi. 13. *Col.* iii. 1, 2. 1 *Pet.* ii. 11. *Psalms* xxiii. xli. lxxii. lxxxiii. cxxi. cxxxvi.

Q. What think you then of the Protestants custom of employing this day in examining and fixing the marks and limits of their lands?

A. Their solicitude for the earth on a day, which of all others does admonish them to fix their thoughts on heaven, shews they have nothing of that spirit of the ancient Church, which, as *St. Austin* says
(*Epist.*

(*Epist.* 118.) did yearly celebrate with great devotion the Ascension of our Saviour.

Q. *Is any thing more to be done?*

A. We are from this day to begin our preparation, as the apostles did, for the receiving of the holy Ghost; by retirement, prayer, spiritual reading and fraternal charity. *Acts* i. 12, 13, 14. *Luke* xxiv. 53.

Q. *What's proper to be read on this feast?*

A. The first chapter of the *Acts* of the apostles; and *Ch.* xlvii. xlviii. xlix. of the third book of the *Following of Christ*.

SECTION XXVII.

Whitsuntide.

Acts ii. 1—11.

John xiv. 23—31.

Q. **WHEN** did the holy Ghost descend upon the apostles?

A. On Pentecost-day; that is to say, on the fiftieth day after *Easter*, about nine in the morning. *Acts* ii.

Q. *Where were the apostles at that time?*

A. In *Jerusalem* together at prayers in company with the blessed Virgin, several holy women, and the rest of the disciples.

Q. *How did this descent happen?*

A. A great

A. A great noise was heard, like a violent wind, from heaven; which fill'd the room, where the disciples were assembled.

Q. And what follow'd?

A. The holy Ghost in the appearance of fiery and divided tongues rested upon every one of the company; enabled them to speak all languages, and fill'd them with zeal and courage.

Q. Did the Jews hear this noise?

A. Yes. And upon hearing it, came to see what the matter was.

Q. And what did they find?

A. They found that the apostles were no longer afraid of them, but publickly proclaim'd the wonders of almighty God and the name of *Jesus* in all languages.

Q. Were the Jews sensible, they spake all languages?

A. Yes. For *Jews* of all nations were then assembled at *Jerusalem* to keep their feast of *Pentecost*.

Q. What was the Jewish Pentecost?

A. A feast in memory of the Law given on *Mount Sinai* in thunder and lightning, fifty days after the deliverance out of *Egypt*; and on this day they made a solemn offering to God, of bread made of the first fruits of their wheat harvest. *Ex. xix. 16, &c. Lev. xxiii. 16, &c.*

Q. What

Q. What relation had the Jewish Pentecost to ours?

A. It was a type of ours. For on this day the holy Ghost writ the new Law, accompanied with a new kind of noise and fire, in the hearts of the faithful, and by their mouths publish'd it to the world. The first fruits likewise of the apostles spiritual harvest were this day offer'd to God.

Q. What meant the noise of a violent wind?

A. It signified that religious terror, which makes way for divine love: And also the effects of the holy Ghost upon those that receive him.

Q. What meant the fire?

A. That the holy Ghost is a spiritual fire, which enlightens the soul; purifies and inflames the heart; consumes whatever is corruptible in it; and raises, consecrates and sacrifices it to God.

Q. Why tongues of fire, with the gift of languages?

A. To express how the holy Ghost inspired the apostles with science and zeal, in order to enlighten and inflame the minds of men, and to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world.

Q. What were the first fruits of the apostles spiritual harvest?

A. Three

A. Three thousand souls, that were converted by St. Peter's first sermon; and five thousand by his second. *Acts* ii. 41. iv. 4.

Q. How did the first converts live?

A. A life of admirable sanctity.

Q. In what was it admirable?

A. 1. They all seem'd to have but one heart and soul.

2. They liv'd in common, selling all they had, and giving their monies to the apostles, to be distributed according to every ones necessities.

3. They rejoyc'd in suffering for the sake of *Christ*.

4. They met daily to pray, to hear the apostles preach, and to receive the blessed Sacrament.

Q. But what was most to be admir'd in the new fram'd Church?

A. The strange alteration in the apostles.

Q. What were the apostles, before they receiv'd the holy Ghost?

A. Ignorant and fearful.

Q. But afterwards?

A. So knowing as to be able to explicate the Scriptures and divine mysteries; so courageous as openly to proclaim *Christ's* Resurrection; which they confirmed by miracles, and by suffering persecution and death

death itself, in testimony of the truth they preach'd.

Q. How are we to sanctify this feast?

A. 1. By adoring the holy Ghost.

2. By begging he would vouchsafe to write upon our hearts the law of God and the maxims of *Jesus Christ*: To give us a love and lively faith of them, and courage to confess them in our way of living.

Q. What are we to beg beside?

A. Grace to imitate the first Christians.

1. In chearfully suffering injuries and persecutions.

2. In fraternal charity.

3. In attending to prayer and the word of God.

4. In a contempt of earthly riches, and in giving alms.

5. In frequenting with due dispositions the holy Communion.

Q. What particular intention ought we to have on this feast, in approaching to the blessed Eucharist?

A. To receive with the adorable body of *Jesus Christ*, his holy and life-giving spirit, without which, his *flesh*, as he says, *avails nothing*; and this in order to obtain the fore-mention'd graces. *Jo. vi. 64.*

Q. Is any thing else to be done?

A. 'Tis adviseable to meditate upon and to renew the obligations we contracted in receiving

receiving the holy sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

Q. What's the sum of these obligations?

A. That we demean ourselves as the children and soldiers of *Jesus Christ*; and labour for such a purity of soul, as becomes the temples of the holy Ghost.

Q. What is proper to be read on this feast?

A. The sermons which made the first converts; their lives and conversations, in the *Acts of the apostles*. Ch. ii. iii. iv. The obligations and effects of baptism. *Rom.* vi. And in the *Following of Christ* Ch. v. B. iii.

Q. Are Monday and Tuesday holy-days?

A. Yes. They are a continuation of this great festival, and for that reason to be sanctified in the manner aforesaid.

SECTION XXVIII.

Ember-Days in Whitsun-week.

See P. I. § XVI.

Q. WHAT's the reason that the Paschal Time and the feast of Pentecost is concluded with three days fast?

A. To give us to understand, that the principal fruit we are to reap from the Church's solemnities, and from those
graces

graces the holy Ghost communicates to us, is the spirit of penance and mortification.

Q. What are we to beg for those, the Church at this time promotes to holy Orders?

A. That they may be, like her first ministers, irreproachable in their lives; fill'd with wisdom, fortitude, charity, and all the other gifts of the holy Ghost.

Q. What are we to do, in regard to the fruits of the earth?

A. 1. To thank God for his blessing upon them during the spring season. 2. To beg he would be pleased to carry them through the summer, to maturity.

Q. And what must we beg for ourselves?

A. That God would enable us by the practice of good works to bring forth the fruits of his holy Spirit, and of all those graces, he has shed upon us in the festivals we have been celebrating.

SECTION XXIX.

Trinity-Sunday.

Rom. xi. 33—36. Mat. xxviii. 18—20.

Q. WHAT mystery does the Church celebrate, on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

A. The

A. The prime mystery of our faith, to wit, that of the most blessed *Trinity*.

Q. *Is this the only day, on which we adore the blessed Trinity?*

A. Far be it from us, to be guilty of so heinous a neglect.

Q. *At what other times are we to adore the blessed Trinity?*

A. Every day, especially every *Sunday* and *Holy-day*, as being the sovereign object of our worship and adoration.

Q. *Why then is this feast instituted?*

A. That the faithful may excite and confirm their faith; make a publick profession of their belief; and preserve themselves from those pestilent errors, which sap the very foundation of Christianity.

Q. *Why is this feast kept on the octave of Pentecost?*

A. To signify that the works of our redemption and sanctification, are common to all the three persons.

Q. *What do you believe of the blessed Trinity?*

A. I believe that the most blessed *Trinity* is one God in three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; who essentially possess the same greatness, power, wisdom and eternity, and in fine an exact equality in all their infinite perfections.

Q. *Why*

Q. Why do we so frequently repeat those words, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?

A. To put ourselves in mind, 1. That we were baptiz'd in the name of one God in three distinct Persons. 2. To dedicate all our actions to his honour. 3. To beg his grace for the well performance of them.

Q. Can this mystery be comprehended by human reason?

A. No. 'Tis infinitely above the reach of our shallow reason.

Q. Why are we then oblig'd to believe it?

A. Because God has reveal'd it to his Church.

Q. Why does God oblige us to believe what we cannot comprehend?

A. Because his divine Majesty is pleased by this means to exercise our faith.

Q. What do you think of such, as are not for believing this or other mysteries, because their reason cannot comprehend them?

A. They foolishly act against the same reason they pretend to stand by.

Q. Why so?

A. Because their reason tells them, that God in his own Nature, Power and Wisdom, must certainly transcend their weak capacity; since even the effects of nature (which are the works of his hand) are above their comprehension.

Q. Is

Q. Is Faith then superior to all human reasoning?

A. Much so; because it has no other foundation than the truth of God himself: and therefore admitting no doubts, can no ways stagger thro' unbelief.

Q. What's to be done on this solemnity?

A. 1. We are to call to mind, what the Church teaches concerning the most blessed Trinity; to make acts of faith, as to all she teaches; and for that purpose to say devoutly the Apostles, or *Nicene*, or *St. Athanasius's* creed; or the *Te Deum*.

2. To acknowledge with gratitude, all that has been done in our behalf, to have been the work and mercy of the most holy Trinity.

3. To adore the divine goodness, power and wisdom, and to thank the blessed Trinity for the work of our Redemption, the memory of which we have now celebrated in all its mysteries.

4. To confess that we are bound to love, serve, seek and honour one God in three Persons.

5. To beg the grace of God, that by a constant fidelity and zeal in all that belongs to his commandments and service, we may acknowledge both the power he has over us, the blessing we have receiv'd, and the entire

entire dependence we have on his holy will.

Q. What beside?

A. 'Tis likewise proper to exercise our faith as to all the other incomprehensible mysteries of our religion; and to make an humble and entire submission of our reason to God, and to his Church, whose children we are by baptism.

Q. What ought we farther to consider on this feast?

A. 1. The dignity and honour we receiv'd by baptism, by a nigh relation to the most blessed Trinity. 2. The obligations which arise from that same dignity.

Q. What is our relation by baptism to the blessed Trinity?

A. By receiving that sacrament we become the children of God the Father; the brothers, coheirs and members of *Jesus Christ*; and the temples of the holy Ghost.

Q. What does each of the divine Persons expect from us, upon account of the aforesaid dignity?

A. 1. The Father expects from us a filial love and fear; an exact obedience; a zeal for his glory, and for the interest of his kingdom.

2. *Jesus Christ*, a strict conformity to his doctrine and example.

3. The holy Ghost, that we preserve a great purity of conscience; that we faithfully

fully comply with his graces and inspirations; and that with particular care we avoid those sins, which stand in the greatest opposition to his purity and goodness.

SECTION XXX.

Corpus-Christi-Day, or the Feast of the blessed Sacrament.

1 Cor. xi. 23—30.

Joh. vi. 55—59.

Q. *WHAT* is the intention of this feast?

A. To commemorate, and give thanks for that great mystery of mercy, which *Christ* left us at his last supper; when, consecrating the bread and wine, he gave us his Body and Blood under those appearances for the remembrance of his passion, for the comfort of his Church, and for the food of our souls.

Q. *When* is this feast kept?

A. On the first *Thursday* after the octave of *Pentecost*.

Q. *Why* has the Church made choice of that day?

A. Because having celebrated at *Pentecost* the feast of her own birth, she applies herself in the week following to the honouring

ing of that great mystery, whereby she is nourish'd, strengthen'd and perfected.

Q. Did she not on Maundy-Thursdaiy commemorate the institution of the blessed Sacrament?

A. She did. But being she was then principally taken up in contemplating the sufferings of her Saviour, she has thought fit to dedicate another day to the memory of so amiable a mystery.

Q. When was this feast instituted?

A. It was instituted in the 13th age, in opposition to those hereticks, who began to attack the Church's ancient faith of this divine mystery.

Q. How may we sanctify this feast and its octave?

A. 1. By strengthening our faith of this mystery. 2. By devoutly assisting at the Church's service. 3. By a holy Communion. 4. By considering what *Christ* requires of us in relation to the holy Sacrament, and what he teaches us as he resides there. 5. By making a daily visit to him in the same holy mysteries.

Q. How are we to strengthen our faith of this mystery?

A. 1. By thoroughly informing ourselves of the many wonders that are here wrought. 2. By making acts of faith as to all the Church teaches.

H

Q. To

Q. To what Divine Service does the Church call the faithful on this solemnity in Catholick Countries?

A. To the holy Mass, benediction, sermon, vespers and procession.

Q. How are we to make our Communion?

A. With respect, gratitude, charity and joy; and with that exactness, as may help to repair all past neglects, and be a model for the future.

Q. What does Jesus Christ require of us, in relation to the blessed Sacrament?

A. That we examine into and reform our defects in hearing Mass, in communicating, and in our behaviour at church.

Q. What does he teach us in the blessed Sacrament?

A. Charity, patience, and humility on all occasions, especially in the church; to make a sacrifice of our body and soul, and of all that we have, to God; to join with him in endeavouring with all assiduity to destroy sin, since it was for its destruction, that he died on the cross.

Q. What then must be said of those, who being obstinate in a sinful course, pretend to join with the Church in paying homage to Jesus Christ in the holy Sacrament?

A. They must certainly be wicked children, disloyal servants, and false adorers, who

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who bow down before God, but serve the devil.

Q. Why are we to visit Jesus Christ in the blessed Sacrament ?

A. Gratitude and our interest oblige us to it.

Q. In what manner ought we to address ourselves to him ?

A. With respect, love, gratitude, confidence and all other pious affections; that are apt to follow from the consideration of those *Titles*, which he has in reference to us.

Q. What are those Titles ?

A. He is our king, mediator, redeemer, advocate, high priest, and victim.

Q. What other Titles has he ?

A. He is our head, our father, brother, spouse and master ; our guide, pastor, comforter, and physician.

Q. Has he any more ?

A. Yes. He is the way, truth and life ; the light, the gate, the vine, the bread of life ; and in fine our judge, and our last end.

Q. What use is to be made of the consideration of these Titles ?

A. In each visit, we must converse with Christ, as present under one or two of them; in order to learn what our duty is to him,

and what we are to hope for and beg of his divine mercy.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament reserv'd in the Tabernacle?

A. 1. That at any time when need requires, it may be carried to the sick, according to the primitive custom of the Church.

2. That the faithful may have the comfort of coming to adore their Saviour, where he is present for their sakes.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament exposed at certain times?

A. 1. To invite the faithful to come and adore *Jesus Christ*.

2. In publick calamities to present to God this pledge of his love towards us; that in regard of his beloved Son, he may be mov'd to shew us mercy.

Q. Why is the blessed Sacrament carried in procession?

A. 1. To celebrate a kind of triumph in honour of *Jesus Christ*. *Jos. vi. 25.*

2. Thereby to repair the many affronts and irreverences offer'd to him in this blessed Sacrament. *2 Kings vi. 1. Esdr. vi. 11.*

3. To obtain a blessing by his presence upon all the places, through which he passes.

Q. What is the Benediction?

A. T

A. 'Tis a service introduc'd by the Church in these later ages, in order to enliven the peoples faith and devotion.

Q. Whence has it the name of Benediction?

A. The word *Benediction*, as likewise the French word *Salut*, are two names borrow'd from the two Latin words *Salus* and *Benedictio* in the hymn of the blessed Sacrament.

Q. Does the Priest's making a Cross with the holy Sacrament upon the people, give grace to their souls?

A. No. For it is not a sacramental action.

Q. Why then is it done?

A. To excite them, 1. To a publick profession of their faith by acts of adoration.

2. To an encrease of love and confidence, by reminding them, that for love of them he resides in the blessed Sacrament.

3. To beg his grace and blessing upon their souls; and particularly strength to carry their cross after him.

SECTION XXXI.

Ember-Days in September.

Q. *W H E N* do these fall?

A. On *Wednesday, Friday* and *Saturday* after the 14th day of *September*.

Q. *What* does the Church read for the gospel on *Saturday*, when her ministers are ordain'd?

A. The parable of the fig-tree, which, being order'd by the master for its barrenness to be cut up, was at the gardener's request permitted to stand another year in expectation of its bearing fruit.

Q. *What* does the Church intend by making choice of this parable?

A. She seems thereby to intimate that the faithful ought to beg for her ministers an industrious and tender charity for their flock.

Q. *Why* are they to beg this Charity for them?

A. That by their prayers, penances and labours, they may obtain pardon for sinners, whom God in his justice is ready to condemn; and that they may spend the time they have gain'd for a reprieve in bringing

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bringing these poor souls to a sincere conversion, which shews itself in worthy fruits of penance.

Q. What notice is to be taken of the fruits of the earth?

A. We must thank God for the harvest, that has been reap'd, and beg grace to make a right use of it; as likewise to labour for that spiritual and incorruptible nourishment, which will bring us to a state of immortality.



Practical Catechism

PART III.

Of the Feasts of Saints appointed by the Church to be kept Holy, &c.

SECTION. I.

St. Andrew Apostle, Nov. 30.

Rom. x. 10—18.

Mat. iv. 18—22.

Q. *WHAT was the manner of St. Andrew's vocation?*

A. Hearing what St. John Baptist said of Christ, he follow'd him, and soon after brought his brother Peter to him. Jo. i. 35, &c.

Q. *What does this teach us?*

A. That we are to imitate the charity of St. Andrew, in communicating to our neighbours, those lights of divine truth, which God has mercifully shed upon us.

Q. *What had St. John said of Christ?*

A. That as for himself, he was not worthy to untie his shoe; that Christ was the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of
of

§. I. St. Andrew, Nov. 30. 153

of the world, and the Son of God. v. 27,
Ec.

Q. What farther account have we of him from the holy Scripture?

A. That at his and his brother St. Peter's request Jesus cur'd the mother-in-law of St. Peter, who was ill of a fever. *Mark* i. 30, 31.

Q. And what does this teach us?

A. It shews us, says St. Ambrose, how much Jesus Christ is inclin'd to hear the prayers, which the Angels, Apostles and Martyrs offer him, for the spiritual health of those who make themselves worthy of their intercession. *De viduis*, t. 4. p. 505.

Q. What was St. Andrew's death?

A. After he had preach'd the faith of Christ, he suffer'd for it upon a cross.

Q. How was he affected to the cross?

A. Upon seeing it as he was led to his execution, he is said to have cried out, *O beloved Cross! which for this long time I have most earnestly desir'd, receive the disciple of him, who died upon thee.*

Q. What became of St. Andrew's body?

A. In the year 357, it was removed from *Patræ* in *Achaia*, where he suffer'd, together with the body of St. Luke, to *Constantinople*; having wrought great miracles in all places, where it stopt on the way, and was receiv'd with incredible joy by all

H 5 the

the people. *S. Paulin. Car. xxvi. S. Hier. Chron. et Vir. illus. c. 7. In Vig. c. 2.*

It is now at *Amalfi*, in the kingdom of *Naples*, where there constantly distils from his tomb a medicinal liquor; and *Baronius* assures us, that this miracle is attested beyond contradiction.

Q. What devotion is most suitable to this feast?

A. 1. To encourage ourselves to follow *Christ* by the consideration of those same motives which made *St. Andrew* his disciple.

2. After the example of this Saint, to accept of crosses and afflictions for the sake of *Christ*.

Q. How are we to suffer crosses?

A. Not only with patience and resignation, but with joy and gladness, as this Saint did.

Q. Why with patience?

A. Because our sins deserve more afflictions, than the whole world can bring upon us.

Q. Why with resignation?

A. Forasmuch as nothing happens but by the permission or appointment of our omnipotent Father, who best knows what's for our good.

Q. Why are we to rejoice in afflictions?

A. 1. Be-

A. 1. Because by them we are nearly associated to our head *Christ Jesus*.

2. We have the best security of our being in the way to heaven; and 3. Of receiving there an unspeakable weight of glory.

Q. *What are we to beg this day?*

A. Grace to be always in readiness to advance the spiritual good of our neighbour that so he may never suffer through our indifferency or neglect. 2. Courage and resolution, to break through all oppositions that would hinder us from following *Christ*. 3. Constancy and perseverance in carrying our cross for the sake of *Christ*.

SECTION II.

*The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Dec. 8.*

Prov. viii. 22—35.

Mat. i. 1—16.

Q. WHY has the Church appointed this day as a festival of joy and thanksgiving?

A. Because she looks on the blessed Virgin in this first moment of her existence, as the morning star, which after that long night of sin, which had cover'd the earth
for

for so many thousand years, begins to rise and foretells the near approach of day.

Q. Was the Conception of the blessed Virgin immaculate?

A. It is piously believed it was so.

Q. What mean you when you say it was Immaculate?

A. I mean, that at the same time that God created the soul of the blessed Virgin and united it to her body, he favour'd her with his preventing grace, which exempted her from the stain of original sin.

Q. Why do you believe this?

A. Because, tho' the Church has not declar'd it an article of faith; 'tis yet for solid reasons the most common opinion of the faithful, and the most authoriz'd by the Church.

Q. What reasons do induce the faithful to believe it?

A. 1. Her being preserv'd according to the belief of the Church her whole life time from the least venial sin.

2. God having design'd her to be the mother of his only begotten Son, 'tis highly improbable he would suffer that flesh to be polluted with sin, of which the body of his Son was to be fram'd.

3. 'Tis reasonable to believe the blessed Virgin was more favour'd than St. John Baptist, who was sanctified in his mother's womb.

Q. If

Q. If the blessed Virgin was conceiv'd without sin, how can Jesus Christ be a Saviour in regard of her?

A. Because she had been subject to original sin, had not the grace of *Jesus Christ* preserv'd her from it.

Q. What advantage was this to Mary?

A. God having taken the entire possession of her this first moment, she was free from concupiscence, was ever after exempt from the least fault, and was ever careful not only to preserve this grace, but to deserve an increase of it by faithfully corresponding with it.

Q. What instruction may we gather from thence?

A. That we ought to use all possible care to preserve in our souls the sanctifying grace, which we receiv'd in baptism, or recover'd by the sacrament of penance, that we may imitate the blessed Virgin in the esteem she had of divine grace.

2. That, if it be a misery to be guilty of original sin, 'tis a much greater and a meer madness wilfully to make ourselves God's enemies by mortal sin; and a diabolical perverseness to continue so.

Q. How comes it that many Christians so easily commit and continue in mortal sin?

A. 'Tis because they don't consider what it is to be the object of an infinite hatred and an omnipotent anger.

Q. What

Q. What other instruction do you find?

A. That we cannot too soon begin to sanctify our souls, in order to prepare them for the receiving of *Jesus Christ* in the holy Sacrament, and that he may be form'd in us by his grace.

Q. How is this preparation to be made?

A. By practising those virtues, by which the blessed Virgin prepar'd herself for receiving the message brought her by the Angel *Gabriel*.

Q. What were those virtues?

A. 1. An ardent love of God and her neighbour. 2. A contempt of the world. 3. A perfect hatred of impurity and all other sins. 4. Humility. 5. Conformity to the will of God, &c.

Q. How may these virtues be acquir'd?

A. By daily recommending ourselves, but particularly on this feast, and during the rest of *Advent*, to the blessed Virgin; that by her intercession, the Holy Ghost, who overshadow'd her, may come and plant them in our souls.

SECTION III.

St. Thomas *Apostle*, Dec. 21.

Eph. ii. 19.

Joh. xx. 24—29.

Q. **W**HAT does the scripture remark concerning this apostle?

A. His courage, his unbelief and his repentance.

Q. On what occasion did he signalize his courage?

A. Upon our Lord's communicating to his disciples his design of returning into Judea (where he had lately been ill treated by the Jews) for the raising his friend Lazarus from the dead. *Jo.* xi. 8.

Q. What was the consequence of this declaration of our Lord?

A. When the rest of the apostles dissuaded him from the journey, lest the Jews should stone him as they had before attempted, St. Thomas encourag'd them to follow their Master, in those words, *Let us go too, and die with him.* *Jo.* xi. 16.

Q. When did St. Thomas shew his unbelief?

A. After our Saviour's Resurrection; when, notwithstanding the other apostles assur'd him they had seen their Master alive

alive again, he openly declar'd, that unless he had the utmost evidence of sense by putting his finger into the holes in his hands and side, he would not believe it. *Jo. xx. 25.*

Q. Did our Saviour condescend to his apostles weakness?

A. Yes. He appear'd again to his disciples, when St Thomas was with them, and offer'd him the satisfaction he desir'd.

Q. What did St. Thomas upon this?

A. He immediately believ'd and confess'd *Christ's Divinity*, saying, *My Lord and my God.*

Q. And what reply did our Saviour make to this profession of Thomas's faith?

A. That his believing, after such a demonstrative evidence, was neither so praiseworthy or rewardable, as was the faith of those who had not the like sensible conviction. *Jo. xx. 29.*

Q. What do we learn from St. Thomas's courage?

A. Not to be frighten'd by any dangers, whether of life, interest or reputation, from our resolution of following *Christ*; but to encourage ourselves with those words of the Saint, *Let us go and die with him.*

Q. On what other occasion may we use those words?

A. As often as we go to Mass, thereby to put ourselves in mind, that we are to die

die to the world, and to make an offering of ourselves with the sacrifice of the altar.

Q. What does St. Thomas's unbelief teach us?

A. 1. It convinces us beyond all doubt, by the most sensible evidence, that the very same body of our Lord was rais'd in which he suffer'd.

2. That we are firmly to believe whatever the church teaches, without expecting miracles, or consulting our senses of seeing or feeling, for a confirmation of her doctrine.

3. That we are to live by faith, whether spiritual comforts be given or denied us.

Q. What use may be made of St. Thomas's confession, Dominus meus & Deus meus; My Lord and my God?

A. 'Tis an aspiration very proper to be us'd on all occasions; especially when we are under troubles of mind, or assaulted with temptations against faith or hope; or that we are approaching to the blessed Sacrament.

Q. Where did St. Thomas preach the gospel?

A. In *Parthia*: And his Relicks were kept at *Edessa* in *Mesopotamia*, where in the fourth Age there was a famous church of his

362 St. Thomas, Dec. 21. P. 3.
his name. *Euseb.* l. 3. c. i. *Rufin.* l. 11.
c. v. *Socr.* l. 4. c. xviii.

Q. What farther account of him have we from ancient history?

A. That *Abgarus* king of *Edessa* having desir'd *Jesus Christ* to come and cure him of a disease, our Saviour answer'd him by letter that after his Ascension, he would send one of his disciples to perform the cure; and that afterwards *St Thomas* was directed by an inspiration to send *St. Thaddæus* one of the seventy disciples, who curing *Abgarus*, converted him and all the town, which preserv'd its faith for several ages. *Euseb.* l. 1. c. xiii.

Q. What ought we to beg by the intercession of this Saint?

A. 1. Courage to overcome all difficulties in the way of salvation.

2. A firm and lively faith for ourselves, and for all under doubts or unbelief.

3. That if unhappily we should fall into sin, *Christ* by his grace would quickly call us back to repentance.

SECTION IV.

St. Stephen, Dec. 26.

Acts vi. 8—10, & c. vii. 54—59. *Mat.*
xxiii. 34—39.

Q. **W**H O was St. Stephen?

A. One of the seven first Deacons;
and the first martyr for the faith of *Christ*.

Q. What account does the Scriptures give
of him?

A. That he was full of faith and the
Holy Ghost, of grace and courage, where-
by he did great wonders; and that he was
indu'd with an irresistible wisdom when he
preach'd the faith of *Christ*. *Acts* vi. 5,
8, 10.

Q. Did he then convert all that heard
him?

A. He confounded them, but they were
not converted; tho' at the same time they
saw his face shine like that of an Angel.
v. 15.

Q. Did he suffer the people to continue in
their sins and errors, for fear of incurring
their displeasure by speaking the truth?

A. No. He severely rebuk'd them for
their obstinacy; and *Christ*, to reward and
increase

164 St. Stephen, Dec. 26. P. 3.

increase his courage, appear'd to him thro' the opened heavens. *Acts* vii. 51.

Q. *What did the Jews, when St. Stephen told them, he saw Jesus in heaven?*

A. They would hear him no longer, but dragg'd him out of the city, and ston'd him to death as a blasphemer. *Acts* vii. 56.

Q. *What did St. Stephen, while they were stoning him?*

A. He pray'd for himself and his enemies.

Q. *How for himself?*

A. In these words; *Domine Jesu, suscipe spiritum meum: Lord Jesus receive my soul.*

Q. *How for his enemies?*

A. In these words; *Lord, do not lay this sin to their charge.*

Q. *What was the effect of this prayer?*

A. The miraculous conversion of St. Paul, who then took care of the cloaths of those that ston'd St. Stephen, and in a manner ston'd him by the hands of all.

Q. *When did St. Stephen suffer?*

A. He suffer'd the same year as our Saviour; and his feast was solemnly kept in the fourth Age (at the latest) the day after Christmas-Day.

Q. *Why the day after Christmas-Day?*

A. To

§. 4. St. Stephen, Dec. 26. 165

A. To intimate that men would never have had courage to die for God, if God had not been made man, to die for men.

Q. *How are we to celebrate this feast?*

A. By thanking almighty God. 1. For the grace, and courage, and wisdom, with which he inspired this Proto-martyr. 2. For the crown of glory, with which he has rewarded his sufferings. 3. For the example he has given us in this Saint of so many admirable virtues.

Q. *What are we to beg of God by the intercession of this Saint?*

A. 1. The spirit of wisdom. 2. Zeal for truth. 3. Courage and patience under persecution. 4. Grace to pardon injuries, and love our enemies.

Q. *Which is that virtue which the Church seems most desirous we should learn of him by inserting a prayer for it in the collect of the feast?*

A. The forgiving of injuries.

Q. *Why are we to pardon injuries?*

A. Because our Saviour had required it as a condition without which we can expect no pardon of our own sins from him, and has consequently made it a necessary condition of our salvation. *Mat.* vi. 15. xviii. 35. *1 Cor.* xiii. 2.

Q. *Wherein does this duty consist?*

A. Not

A. Not only in wishing and doing our enemies no harm, but in being ready to shew them all offices of charity because they are men and Christians, our neighbours and our brethren.

Q. *When may it be hop'd, we have sincerely pardon'd injuries, and that we love our enemies?*

A. 1. When by a civil letter, a proper mediator, or a friendly conference we endeavour to compose the difference.

2. When we seek occasion of speaking to them, and do it with easiness and freedom.

3. When we speak well of them, to such especially as are like to inform them of all we say.

4. When we seek opportunities of being serviceable to them, - or to their best friends.

Q. *Whom must we pray for, besides ourselves on this feast?*

A. For such as are obstinate against truth; for all that are at variance, and particularly for our own enemies; and for all that are chosen to any Church ministry, that they may resemble St. Stephen in charity, courage, and zeal for truth.

Q. *When was the body of St. Stephen found?*

A. In

§. 5. *St. John Evangelist, Dec. 27. 167*

A. In the year 415; and innumerable miracles were wrought by his Relicks, many of which are attested by *St. Evodius. l. i. ch. i. ii. iv. St. Augustin de Civ. Dei. l. 22. ch. viii. Ep. ciii. Serm. cclxxxvi. Serm. cccxvii. Serm. cccxix. Serm. lxxix. Serm. xciv. St. Prosp. l. 4. de Promiss. ch. v.*

Q. How were these miracles wrought?

A. As all others have been, in the name and by the power of *Jesus Christ*; for it is from him that we receive favours by the Saints: And therefore that our piety may not degenerate into superstition, we must always distinguish the servant from his Lord, and without stopping at the Saint, advance by him to God himself; for the Saint *prays* in the quality of a servant, and it is God who as Lord and Master grants what and to whom he pleases. *St. Aug. Serm. cccxviii, cccxix.*

SECTION V.

St. John Evangelist, Dec. 27.

Ecclus. xv. 1—6. John xxi. 19—24.

Q. WHAT account does the Scripture give of him?

A. It tells us that *St. John* with his brother *St. James*, being invited by *Christ*

168 St. John Evangelist, Dec. 27. P. 3.
to follow him they immediately left their
father and all they had, to be his disciples.
Mat. iv. 21.

Q. At what age was St. John call'd?

*A. In the five or six and twentieth year
of his age.*

Q. What lesson is this to young people?

*A. That they ought without losing any
time, to apply themselves to a virtuous life,
and to let no human considerations be a
hindrance to their good designs.*

*Q. How was St. John favour'd by Jesus
Christ?*

*A. He was chosen with his brother and
St. Peter, to be an eye-witness of his
Transfiguration; of his agony; and of his
raising to life the daughter of *Jairus*. *Mat.*
*xvii. 1. Mark xiv. 33. Luke viii. 51.**

Q. What may we gather from hence?

*A. 1. That we are not to look for spi-
ritual comforts any farther than they may
be necessary to support us in afflictions.*

*2. That to encourage ourselves under
trials, we must look up to the glory of the
next life.*

*3. That to rise from sin to the life of
grace, our contrition must be grounded
upon motives of love.*

*Q. What name did our Saviour give to
St. John and his brother?*

A. He

9. 5. St. John Evangelist, Dec. 27. 169

A. He call'd them *Boanerges*; that is to say, the *Sons of thunder*, in consideration of their zeal for his glory. *Mark* iii. 17.

Q. But, did not their zeal sometimes carry them too far?

A. Yes. *Christ* twice reprehended them for it.

Q. On what occasions?

A. 1. They meeting with one who cast out devils, tho' he was not of the number of *Christ*'s followers they forbid him; but *Christ* told them they did wrong. *Luke* ix. 49, 50.

2. The *Samaritans* happening once not to entertain our Saviour, they were for calling down fire from heaven to destroy them. But *You know not*, said our Saviour, *what manner of spirit you are of; the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* *Luke* ix. 54, 55, 56.

Q. What doctrine do you raise from these reprehensions?

A. 1. That we are not to envy others for doing good; nor be so proud as to think nothing well done, but what we have a hand in.

2. That if the injuries done to *Christ* will not warrant our revenge; much less are we to be exasperated for any affront done to ourselves.

I

3. That

3. That we must be very careful, not to lessen the reputation of God's ministers.

Q. What sin can it be in me, to say of them, what I have heard of others concerning them?

A. It may be a very great sin. For it may in effect hinder them from being instrumental in casting of devils out of the souls of men.

Q. What other instances are there in holy Scripture of Christ's singular regard to St. John?

A. Our Saviour deputed him with St. Peter, to prepare the paschal supper, (*Luke* xxii. 8.) at which he allow'd him the privilege of leaning upon his breast: (*Jo.* xxi. 20.) And from the cross he substituted him, in his own stead, the Son of the blessed Virgin, committing him to the care of her, when he was leaving the world. *Cō.* xix. 26, 27.

Q. What lessons have we here?

A. 1. That a lively faith and an ardent charity are requisite for a due preparation to Communion: And that we are to entertain our Saviour with a most tender affection.

2. That if we hope to gain the favour of *Jesus*, and the motherly protection of the blessed Virgin, we must with our utmost care avoid impurity, even to its least appearances and occasions.

Q. Why

§. 5. St. John Evangelist, Dec. 27. 171

Q. Why so?

A. Because it was St. John's perpetual virginity that endear'd him to our blessed Saviour. *S. Hier. L. contra Jovin.*

Q. What virtues has St. John particularly recommended in his writings?

A. A love of *Jesus*, of truth, and of our neighbour; and an aversion to sin and to the world.

Q. What are we to beg of God, by his intercession?

A. The aforesaid virtues.

SECTION VI.

The Holy Innocents, Dec. 28.

Rev. xiv. 1—5.

Mat. ii. 13—18.

Q. WHAT Innocents were these?

A. The infants murder'd by *Herod's* orders, when he hop'd to destroy among the rest our new-born *Jesus*. These the Church in all ages has reverenc'd as real martyrs of *Jesus Christ*, tho' massacred before the use of reason.

Q. What may we learn from the sufferings of these Innocents?

A. That whatever malice God permits the wicked to exercise against the just, it is

for the good of those that suffer it: And therefore that one ought not to yield to an excess of grief and disquiet, when afflictions fall upon us; but to wait with patience under all the appointments of God, in hopes of the recompence he has promis'd,

Q. Why does the Church express a kind of mourning on this feast, by the ornaments of her altars?

A. 1. To express the sorrow she still conceives upon remembering *Herod's* barbarity.

2. Because she looks upon this first persecution, rais'd by *Herod* against *Christ*, as a prelude to those that were to follow, 'till his death and passion.

3. She is sorry to see so many Christians take after the *Jews* and *Herod*, and persecute *Jesus* from his very birth.

Q. What Christians do you mean?

A. 1. Those who by sin make *Christ* to die, almost as soon as he has begun by grace to live in their souls.

2. Those who by ill example destroy the baptismal innocence of young children.

3. Those who upon festivals pretend to join in devotion with the Church, but effectually murder *Christ* by their sacrilegious Communions.

4. A great number of mothers, who prove no better than so many *Herods* to their children.

Q. H

Q. How does this happen?

A. 1. By laying them in the same bed with them, or with their nurses; where every night for many months, they are in danger of being overlaid.

2. By unnaturally putting their children out to suck a stranger's breast; not without danger of their health and life, and frequently of their salvation.

3. By excessive fondness and yielding to their children's inclinations; which renders them ungovernable, to the destruction both of soul and body.

4. By ill example or a worldly education; or by giving them no education at all.

Q. What are parents to do on this feast?

A. 1. To examine how they have discharged'd their duty to their children, and to resolve upon amendment of past neglects.

2. To offer up their children to almighty God; and beg he would rather take them out of the world, than suffer them to take evil ways and rebel against him.

Q. And what are children to do?

A. 1. To beg God would reward their parents for the care they have taken for their education; or pardon them, in case they have neglected it.

2. To offer themselves to be his faithful servants, and to beg they may rather die than ever live to offend him by a mortal sin.

Q. What may all in general beg of God by the intercession of the Holy Innocents?

A. 1. That none in any of the afore-said ways, may be guilty of Herod's sin.

2. That we may all be qualified for heaven by becoming as children, in humility and simplicity, in docility and submission; and in being strangers to all that's sinful. Matt. xviii. 3.

SECTION VII.

St. Thomas of Canterbury, Dec. 29.

Heb. v. 1—6.

John x. 11—16.

Q. WHO was St. Thomas?

A. Archbishop of Canterbury, who, after a tedious banishment, was murder'd in his own Cathedral at Vespers.

Q. What was the occasion of his sufferings?

A. His refusing to subscribe to such laws, as he judg'd injurious to the Church.

Q. What proofs are there for his death having been precious in the sight of God?

A. The many glorious miracles perform'd at his tomb which were deservedly receiv'd by our ancestors as so many authentick attestations from heaven of his sanctity and the justice of his cause.

Q. What

§. 8. St. Sylvester, Dec. 31. 175

Q. What lesson has this martyr left us?

A. A lesson of constancy and courage in the discharge of our duties; and that no human respects ought to over-rule our conscience.

Q. Whom are we to pray for?

A. 1. For the prelates and pastors of God's Church. 2. For all under sufferings for justice sake. 3. For our Sovereign and our Country.

Q. What are we to beg for our Country?

A. 1. That peace and charity may be establish'd amongst us. 2. That we may be united in one faith, and live according to the gospel.

3. That God would remove his scourges from it; preserve it from atheism and infidelity; and make us all zealous for justice, virtue, and truth.

SECTION VIII.

St Sylvester, Dec. 31.

2 *Tim.* iv. 1—8.

Luke xii. 35, 40.

Q. WHO was this Saint?

A. He was bishop of Rome, in whose time, *Constantine*, the first Christian

I 4

Emperor

176 St. Sylveſter, Dec. 31. P. 3

Emperor, ſettled the Church in peace, after three hundred years of perſecution.

Q. What's the duty of this day?

A. 1. To thank God for the peace of the Church.

2. To reſolve to contribute our part for the extirpation of what remains of idolatry.

Q. What remains of idolatry do you mean?

A. 1. The ſpending *Sundays* and feſtivals in exceſſes and prophaneneſs. *2.* The preparing for *Lent* by a *Carnival* of ſinful extravagances and intemperance. *3.* The abuſe of Churches in looſe and amorous converſation. *4.* The making uſe of charms for the recovery of health; ſuperſtitious obſervations of days as lucky or unlucky, going to fortune tellers, believing dreams, &c. All theſe are ſo many remains of idolatry.

Q. What are we to pray for?

A. For the peace of the Church and the propagation of its faith amongſt heathens and unbelievers; and againſt both ſpeculative and practical Arianiſm.

Q. What was Arius his hereſy?

A. He deny'd the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. Where was he condemn'd?

A. By

§. 9. St. Matthias, Feb. 24. 177

A. By the bishops of the Catholick Church, assembled in a council at *Nice*.

Q. What mean you by practical *Arianism*?

A. I mean those errors in life and practice, which are so opposite to what *Christ* taught, that they seem to be an implicit denial of *Christ* being God.

Q. Can you point me out some of those errors?

A. There are errors of pride, ambition, love of pleasure, interest and ease, which are all directly contrary to the maxims of God Incarnate.

SECTION IX.

St. Matthias *Apostle*, Feb. 24.

Acts i. 15—26

Mat. xi. 25—30.

Q. UPON what occasion was St. Matthias taken into the number of the apostles?

A. Upon St. Peter's declaring in a publick assembly of all the faithful at *Jerusalem*, as their head and guide, the necessity of chusing one into the place of *Judas*, whose self-murder had made a vacancy in the College of the apostles. *Acts* i. 16, 20.

Q. What recommended St. Matthias to the apostleship?

A. A constant attendance upon our Saviour, from his baptism by St. John 'till his Ascension. *Acts i. 21, 23.*

Q. What method was taken in the choice of this Saint?

A. The whole assembly join'd in prayer to God, *the searcher of hearts*, that he would direct their choice; and of the two, propos'd for the dignity, he would point out to them which was the most acceptable.

Q. What may we learn from hence?

A. 1. In all difficult cases to consult God by prayer for direction.

2. That it highly concerns the faithful to be earnest in their supplications to almighty God, for such bishops and pastors, as may inherit the spirit of the first apostles.

Q. Why does this so much concern the faithful?

A. Because our Saviour tells them, that, *If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.* *Mat. xv. 14.*

Q. What think you then of such as take no care to discharge their duty in this point?

A. They have great reason to fear lest one time or other they may fall under the conduct of a *Judas*, who would not pray for a *Matthias*.

Q. What

§. 9. St. Matthias, Feb. 24. 179

Q. What devotion is suitable to the day?

A. 1. We are to thank God for the choice he made of this Saint.

2. To humble ourselves in consideration of *Judas's* fall; and to place our whole confidence in God, who alone can support our weakness.

3. To beg that no motives of private interest however fairly painted over may ever draw us from the obligation of truth and justice.

Q. And who particularly ought to make this prayer?

A. Wives, children, stewards, lawyers, overseers of the poor, and all that have undertaken any place of trust.

Q. What must we beg of God by this Saint's intercession for the pastors of the Church?

A. 1. That none may engage in the sacred ministry, but by the choice of heaven.

2. That he would be pleas'd to preserve such as are engag'd from *Judas's* avaricious spirit; and indue them with the disinterested, laborious and zealous spirit of his holy apostles.

3. That he would inspire such as nominate to funds or benefices, to overlook all human respects, and present the persons they think best qualify'd.

S E C.

SECTION X.

St. Joseph, March 19.

Ecclus. xlv. 1—6.

Mat. i. 18—21.

Q. WHO was St. Joseph?

A. He was a poor carpenter, descended of the royal family of *David*, the spouse of the blessed Virgin, and foster father to the Son of God.

Q. What account does the Scripture give of him?

A. It gives him the character of a *just man*. *Mat. i. 19.*

Q. What may we learn from hence?

A. That sanctity and perfection is very consistent with a life of toil and labour.

Q. How may this sanctity be acquir'd?

A. By setting *St. Joseph* before our eyes as a pattern for our imitation.

Q. As how?

A. *St. Joseph* being *just*, we may conclude, 1. That he joyn'd innocence with his labour.

2. That he sanctify'd his work by daily prayer and repeated oblations to almighty God.

3. That

§. 10. St. Joseph, March 19. 181

3. That he discharg'd all the obligations of his calling, with a chearful submission to the will of God, who has enjoin'd labour as a penance upon the sons of Adam.

Q. How did St. Joseph behave himself to the blessed Virgin, before he was acquainted with the mystery of the Incarnation?

A. He had thoughts indeed of leaving her, but yet in so quiet a way, as to cast no blemish on her reputation; and this method he design'd to take, because he was a just man. *Mat. i. 19.* And God was pleas'd to permit St. Joseph to be seiz'd with this surprize, that this very suspicion of his might be a proof to us of the Virgin's purity. *S. Chrys. Hom. 4. in Mat.*

Q. What lesson does he give us here?

A. Not rashly to censure so much as in thought, much less to expose in words, whatever has an ill appearance in our neighbour's conduct.

Q. Why so much care to be taken in this point of thinking or speaking ill of our neighbour?

A. That we may be just as St. Joseph was.

Q. Where's the injustice of this liberty of censuring others?

A. 'Tis

A. 'Tis an injustice, 1. In regard of God, as being an incroachment upon his divine prerogative of searching the heart of man.

2. *To our neighbour*, for it is not doing, as we would be done by.

3. *To ourselves*, being it provokes the severe judgment of God and man against ourselves. And 'tis generally found that censorious persons are guilty of greater and more visible imperfections, than those are, upon whom they so freely spend their verdict. *Mat. vii. 2.*

Q. Did God leave his Servant under these perplexities?

A. No. An Angel was sent to inform him of the mystery, and that he should give the name of *Jesus* to the infant God, because he was to save his people from their sins, *Mat. i. 21.* Thus assuring him both of the fidelity of his spouse, and of the eminent dignity of the fruit of her womb.

Q. What gather you from hence?

A. That the intercession of St. Joseph must certainly be much available towards our reconciliation with God, and to render *Christ* effectually a *Jesus* or Saviour to us.

Q. What comforts did St. Joseph receive after this information of the angel?

A. Of seeing our new-born Saviour, and him ador'd by the *Wisemen*.

Q. But

§. 10. St. Joseph, March 19. 183

Q. But did his comforts continue for any long time?

A. No. The providence of God, which always interweaves bitters and sweets in the lives of his saints, to try them by the one and support them by the other, soon sent an Angel with tidings of *Herod's* bloody design, and with orders for him to fly into *Egypt*, with the Infant *Jesus* and his Virgin Mother.

Q. What did St. Joseph thereupon?

A. Without consulting private interest or inclination, or asking any questions, he immediately obey'd the orders given him. *Mat. ii. 14.*

Q. What instruction may be rais'd from this example?

A. That we ought, 1. Readily and without reply to obey the commands of God and our superiors.

2. Rather to quit country, friends, relations, and all the world, than endanger the losing of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. What virtues ought we on this feast to study, and beg of God by St. Joseph's intercession?

A. 1. A lively faith of the mysteries of our redemption. 2. Purity. 3. Charity to our neighbour in concealing his seeming defects. 4. Obedience to the will of God.
5. A ten-

5. A tender love of *Jesus*, which may prompt us to keep him always in our company and in our hearts.

Q. What besides?

A. 1. Married persons ought to beg grace for themselves and their children. 2. And all an exact fidelity in discharging the duties of their state.

Q. How are Christians to behave themselves in marriage?

A. With prudence, decency and purity, and not after the brutal manner of infidels who know not God and abandon themselves to their irrational passions. *Tob. viii. 5, 9. 1 Theff. iv. 5.*

Q. What are the mutual duties of married persons?

A. To love, and bear with one another; to live peaceably, and conspire in all things, according to God's pleasure, to the good of their family. *1 Cor. vii. 1 Pet. iii.*

Q. What are the faults they must beware of?

A. 1. Excessive fondness, so as to flatter one another in their sins. 2. Jealousy. 3. Unfaithfulness. 4. Quarrelling, impatience, &c.

Q. What's the duty of husbands to their wives?

A. 1. Love, protection, kind treatment.
2. Con-

§. 11. *The Annunciation, Mar. 25. 185*

2. Condescension to their weaknesses and infirmities. 3. Good example. 4. To allow them the government of the family, as far as prudence directs; but not so as to let them domineer.

SECTION XI.

The Annunciation, Mar. 25.

Isa. vii. 10—15.

Luke i. 26—38.

Q. *WHAT feast does the Church celebrate to-day?*

A. The Conception or Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Q. *Why then is it call'd the Annunciation, or Lady-day?*

A. Because on this day the Angel Gabriel announc'd and declar'd to the blessed Virgin the mystery of the Incarnation and that she was chosen to be mother of the world's Redeemer.

Q. *What virtues has our Saviour recommended to us in this mystery?*

A. 1. A most profound *Humility*. For being equal to his Father, and one God with him, he in a manner annihilated himself in becoming man and taking upon him the appearance of a slave.

2. A per-

186 *The Annunciation, Mar. 25. P. 3.*

2. A perfect *Obedience* to the will and decrees of his eternal Father.

3. An infinite *Love* to mankind, his enemies.

4. Hatred to sin. 5. Poverty and a contempt of worldly greatness. 6. Chastity.

Q. How did the blessed Virgin, receive the news, the Angel brought her ?

A. With an admirable modesty, humility, faith and submission to the will of God.

Q. In what did she shew her modesty and love of chastity ?

A. In being troubled at the sight of the Angel, who appear'd as a young man ; and being willing rather to forego the dignity of mother of God, than to be wanting to her vow of chastity.

Q. In what, her humility ?

A. In declaring herself the handmaid of our Lord, when she was advanc'd to be the mother of God.

Q. Her faith and submission ?

A. When she said, Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Q. What follow'd upon the blessed Virgin's consent ?

A. She immediately conceiv'd Jesus Christ in her chaste womb, by the operation of

§. 11. *The Annunciation, Mar. 25.* 187

of the holy Ghost, who framed a body for *Jesus Christ* out of her purest blood, and united a soul to it; and this body and soul was at the same moment united to the second Person of the most blessed Trinity.

Q. Why did God almighty require the blessed Virgin's consent to this mystery?

A. That *Mary's* obedience might make amends for *Eve's* disobedience.

Q. Draw a parallel between Eve and Mary?

A. 1. *Eve* was tempted by a bad Angel; *Mary* was saluted by a good.

2. *Eve* yielding to the temptation, disobey'd God; *Mary* obey'd him by believing the Angel.

3. *Eve* presented to *Adam* the fruit of death; *Mary* has given us the fruit of life.

4. *Eve* began our ruin; *Mary* our salvation.

Q. What may we conclude from hence?

A. That as *Jesus* is the second *Adam*; so is *Mary* the second *Eve*; that is to say, the true mother of all living. Gen. i. 20.

Q. How may we joyn with the Church in this double solemnity of Jesus and Mary?

A. 1. By adoring the eternal Word annihilated in becoming man. 2. By thanking his infinite mercy for so doing. *Psal.* xlv.

3. By

3. By lamenting our common misery in so little corresponding with the divine mercy ; resolving to pay him our homage and fidelity for the remainder of our life, and joining with *Jesus Christ* in making war against pride and concupiscence, against the world, the flesh and the devil.

4. By endeavouring to answer the design of our Saviour's being made man, which was that we might become *like* to God and *be made partakers of Divine Nature*. *Mat. v. 48. 2 Pet. i. 4.*

5. By duly considering and estimating the virtues recommended to us by *Jesus* and *Mary* : and praying for grace to practice them.

SECTION XII.

St. George, April 23.

2 *Tim.* ii. 8—10. } *John* xv. 1—7.
and iii. 10—12.

Q. *HOW* comes St. George's-day to be a feast of obligation ?

A. Because St. George is the antient Patron of this nation.

Q. *What* was St. George ?

A. A Sol-

§. 12. St. George, April 23. 189

A. A Soldier of *Jesus Christ*, and an illustrious Martyr under the Emperor *Dio- clesian*.

Q. *Why did our fore-fathers make choice of him for their patron?*

A. Upon account of his courage in his military profession, and of his constancy in suffering for truth and justice.

Q. *What are we to beg of God by his intercession?*

1. Courage and constancy, that like valiant soldiers of *Jesus Christ*, we may overcome all enemies and obstacles between us and heaven.

Q. *What need have Christians now-a-days of any extraordinary courage?*

A. 1. That they may not yield to the sinful customs and ill example of the world;

2. Nor to interior temptations, nor to dejection.

3. That they may bear with a Christian spirit, afflictions, injuries, sickness, &c.

4. That they may not be daunted with the difficulties which occur in the discharge of their respective duties.

Q. *What else must we pray for?*

A. That God would be pleas'd to unite the whole nation in the profession of that primitive Faith, for which the Saint suffer'd death.

S E C.

SECTION XIII.

St. Mark, April 25.

Ezech. i. 10—14.

Luke x. 1—9.

Q. WHO was St. Mark ;

A. A disciple of St Peter, and one of the four Evangelists.

Q. Is this day a feast of obligation ?

A. No. But 'tis however a day of abstinence and prayer.

Q. What prayer to day more than on other days ?

A. The long litanies are said publickly in the Churches.

Q. What means the word Litany ?

A. The same as Rogation, and they both signify prayers or supplications.

Q. Why is this day in particular chosen for abstinence and prayer ?

A. In imitation of St. Mark's disciples, the first Christians of Alexandria, who under this Saint's conduct, were eminent for their great prayer, abstinence and sobriety.

Q. By whom was this day first set apart for abstinence and publick prayer ?

A. By

§. 13. St. Mark, April 25. 191

A. By St. Gregory the great, call'd the apostle of England, as an acknowledgment of the divine mercy, in putting a stop to a mortality in his time in *Rome*.

Q. For what intention are we to offer our prayers and abstinence?

A. 1. To appease God's anger provok'd by our sins.

2. To prevent and deprecate all contagious and pestilential distempers.

3. To obtain the blessings of heaven upon the fruits of the earth.

Q. Why these three?

A. Because famine and dearth, and mortality which is caused by them in men and beasts, are the scourges of almighty God.

Q. Is there any great necessity at present of appeasing God's anger?

A. Very great. For scandals multiply, luxury and disorder gain ground in all conditions; and the law of God is in a manner trodden under foot.

Q. How do the processions, which are made in Catholick countries, help to appease God's anger?

A. They help to make the Church's penance more publick, and as it were proclaim in the streets and country, *Do penance and beg pardon of almighty God?*

S E C-

SECTION XIV.

St. Philip and St. James Apostles,
May 1.

Wisd. v. 1—5.

Jo. xiv. 1—13.

Q. *WHAT* account can you give me out of the holy Scripture of these two apostles?

A. First as to St. Philip, he was so overjoy'd to have found the Messias, Jesus of Nazareth, that he imparted immediately the happy news to his friend Nathaniel, and conducted him to him. *Jo.* i. 45.

Q. *What* said Nathaniel?

A. He seem'd to undervalue what St. Philip told him; by saying, *Can any thing good come out of Nazareth.* v. 46.

Q. *What* reply did St. Philip make?

A. He said no more than, *Come and see:* Thus shewing on this first occasion, a meekness, prudence, and steadiness worthy of an apostle.

Q. *Did* he bring any others to Jesus Christ?

A. Yes. Some Gentiles desiring to see our Saviour, St. Philip with St. Andrew gain'd

§. 14. *St. Philip and James, May 1. 193*
gain'd admittance for them. *John xii.*
21, 22.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. That it should be our care by word and example, and by all other means, to bring unbelievers to the faith of *Christ*, and sinners to repentance.

Q. What further account in the gospel is there of this apostle?

A. Our Saviour designing by miracle to feed five thousand men, ask'd *St. Philip*, in order to try his faith, by what means bread could be provided for so great a multitude.

Q. And what answer did he make?

A. He answered, that two hundred penny-worth would not suffice to give every one a little morsel. *John vi. 5, 7.*

Q. What does this intimate?

A. That such as are in distress, are not to fix their thoughts upon their wants, but upon the goodness, wisdom and power of God, who bids us hope in him.

Q. Is any thing else related of him?

A. He afterwards made this petition to our Saviour, *Domine, ostende nobis 1a rem, & sufficit nobis: Lord, shew us the Father, and that will satisfy us. John xiv. 8.*

Q. And what answer made our Saviour?

A. He answer'd in these words, *Have I been so long with you, and you have not known me yet?*

K

194 *St. Philip and James, May 1. P. 3.*
yet? Philip, he that sees Me, sees my Fa-
ther. v. 9.

Q. May we not take these words as spo-
ken to ourselves?

A. Yes. And it ought to be a con-
fusion to us, that, whereas God has been so
long present to us by his power, wisdom
and goodness; by his inspirations, blessings,
and chastisements; by his holy word and
sacraments; we have taken almost as little
notice of him, as if we had not known
him.

Q. What use may be made of St. Philip's
petition, Domine, &c.

A. 'Tis a proper aspiration to express
our desire of seeing God in his glory, and
our contempt of all earthly vanities.

Q. What farther is related of him?

A. 1. That he was a married man, and
had several daughters, and yet the care of
his family did not hinder him from medi-
tating continually on the law and the pro-
phets, which taught him to expect and
to discover the Messias. Euf. l. iii. c. 31.
St. Chrys. Hom. xix. in Jo.

2. That he and St. John the Evangelist,
appeared to the Emperor Theodosius, and
promis'd him victory over Eugenius, which
was gain'd the next day by a visible miracle.
Theod. l. v. c. 24.

Q. Now

§. 14. *St. Philip and James May 1. 195*

Q. Now what account can you give me of St. James ?

A. St. James the less, surnamed the Just, was near kinsman to our Saviour and the first bishop of Jerusalem ; a person of extraordinary sanctity, mortification, and prayer ; and at last for preaching Christ, was by the Jews thrown down from the pinnacle of the Temple. Mat. xiii. 55. Gal. i. 19. Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. 8.

Q. Did he write any thing ?

A. He has left us a divine epistle, which is part of the holy Scripture ; wherein he so plainly teaches the necessity of good works in order to salvation, that Luther (the first founder of the Protestant heresy, and an enemy to all good works) would not suffer his followers to receive it, as a part of scripture. Luth. de Cap. Bab. T. ii. Fol. 86.

Q. What are we to ask of God by the intercession of these two apostles ?

A. 1. A lively faith. 2. The spirit of prayer and mortification. 3. The conversion of unbelievers, and especially of our relations, that are engaged in sin or error.

SECTION XV.

*The Finding of the Cross, May 3.**Phil. ii. 5—11.**Joh. iii. 1—15.**Q. WHAT's the meaning of this feast?**A.* 'Tis a festival in memory of that day wherein *St. Helen*, mother of *Constantine*, the first Christian Emperor, found the Cross of *Christ* in the year 326, about 180 years after it had been buried by the Heathens.*Q. Why did St. Helen go as far as Jerusalem to seek the Cross?**A.* Because she look'd upon it as a relick that deserved her pains in seeking it, and her veneration, in case she found it.*Q. Did the primitive Christians pay any respect to relicks?**A.* Yes. They paid a relative honour, as Catholicks do now.*Q. What mean you by a relative honour?**A.* I mean such an honour as we give to material churches or books of Scripture, or to sacred vessels; that is to say, we honour and value them, as things that in some particular manner *relate* or belong to God.*Q. What*

§. 15. *The Inv. of the Cross, May 3. 197*

Q. What proof have you of any veneration paid to relicks in primitive times?

A. This very fact is a sufficient proof. For as *St. Helen* would never have sought the cross of the bad thief, as being in all respects a thing very unvaluable; so she would never have sought for the Cross of *Christ*, but that she had some veneration for it.

Q. What other instances of this relative honour given to relicks, do you find among the ancients?

A. 1. The bones of *St. Ignatius*, martyr, were with great veneration kept at *Antioch*, as an *inestimable treasure*; and so were *St. Polycarp's* at *Smyrna*. *Acta Sincera SS. Igna. & Polyc.*

2. *Vigilantius*, in the fourth Age, was condemn'd as a heretick, for denying a veneration due to relicks. *Hier. contra Vigil.*

Q. What are to be our sentiments on this feast?

A. 1. Of gratitude and love of God.
2. Of penance and detestation of sin. 3. Of humility, patience, and submission to the will of God.

Q. How does the cross recommend to us gratitude and love of God?

K 3

A. By

198 *The Inv. of the Cross, May 3. P. 3.*

A. By putting us in mind, that all our Saviour's sufferings were for love of us, and for our redemption.

Q. *How does it invite us to penance and a detestation of sin?*

A. By reminding us, that our sins were the cause of our Saviour's passion; and that if *Christ* did penance for sins which were not his, we ought to do it for our own.

Q. *What motives does the Cross suggest of humility, patience and submission?*

A. It sets before us the example of *Jesus Christ*, who humbled himself and was obedient, even to death upon the Cross.

Q. *Ought we frequently to remember the Cross of Christ?*

A. Yes. We are daily to renew the memory of it, by devoutly saying the creed, by often making the sign of the Cross; and by contemplating the Crucifix upon the altar, or in our oratory.

Q. *Why are we often to make the sign of the Cross?*

A. That as with it we were baptiz'd, so by the same we may consecrate the day, and all our actions, to the honour of *Christ* crucified; and obtain his blessing on all we do.

Q. *Was this the practice of the primitive Christians?*

A. Yes.

§. 16. St. John Baptist, June 24. 199

A. Yes. At our going in or out of doors, says Tertullian, when we put on our cloaths or shoes, when we wash ourselves, or sit down to table, when we light up candles, when we go to rest, in short, whatever business we are about, we make upon our foreheads the sign of the Cross, De Corona Mil. c. iii.

Q. What other use did the primitive Christians make of the sign of the Cross?

A. St. Aibanasius, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Epiphanius, and other holy Fathers assure us, it was successfully used against the molestations of evil spirits.

SECTION XVI.

St. John Baptist, June 24.

Isa. xlix. 1. &c.

Luke i. 57—68.

Q. WHAT was St. John Baptist?

A. A man sent by God to prepare the way for the Messiah, and was therefore styl'd his *Precursor* or fore-runner.

Q. Did any thing extraordinary happen before his birth?

A. 1. The Angel *Gabriel* gave notice of his birth to his father *Zachary*, a holy priest.

K. 4.

2. St

200 St. John Baptist, June 24. P. 3.

2. St. Elizabeth miraculously conceiv'd him in her old age.

3. *Jesus Christ*, when in the womb of the blessed Virgin, make him a visit, for to sanctify him before he was born.

Q. *What direction is this for mothers?*

A. It directs them to pray for their children before they are born, that God would give them such a natural temper and constitution, as may dispose them hereafter to receive the seeds of virtue.

Q. *What wonder happen'd at his birth?*

A. His father St. Zachary recover'd his speech, which he had lost for not believing the Angel's message; and spake that admirable canticle *Benedictus*.

Q. *What's the sum of this canticle?*

A. 'Tis this: That upon the birth of this holy Precursor, at which the light of *Jesus Christ* began to break forth; the world ought to rejoice, as at the approach of day.

Q. *What was his life?*

A. A life of admirable innocence, mortification, humility and zeal.

Q. *What proof have you of his innocence?*

A. His early retiring into the desert, where he led both a solitary and mortified life; and so became a pattern of that solitary life, which in all succeeding ages has furnish'd

§. 16. St. John Baptist, June 24. 201
furnish'd the Church with Saints. Luke
i. 80.

Q. In what appear'd his mortification?

A. In his meat, and drink, and clothing.
For his drink was water; his food, locusts
and wild honey; and his garment, camel's
hair and sack-cloth. *Mat.* iii. 4.

Q. What instances are there of his humility?

A. 1. He declar'd himself to be no more
than *the voice of one crying in the desert*; the
lowest of all the characters which the pro-
phets had described him by. *Jo.* i. 23.

2. He disown'd the honour of being
accounted a prophet or the Messias, when
the *Jews* imagin'd him to be either the one
or the other; and that *Christ* himself said,
he was *more than a prophet*, and even the
greatest of the sons of men. *Jo.* i. 21.
&c. *Mat.* xi. 9.

*Q. Why did our Saviour style him more
than a prophet?*

A. Because he pointed out the world's
Messias then present, whom the prophets
only foretold and saw at a distance.

*Q. In what consisted St. John's great-
ness?*

A. In his contempt of the world, and of
all that's reputed valuable in it.

Q. What does this teach us?

K 5

A. 1. That

A. 1. That to be great in the judgment of *Christ*, the eternal Wisdom, we are not to love the things of this world.

2. That by doing penance and contemning the world and ourselves, we may prepare the ways of *Christ*.

Q. How did he shew his zeal?

A. 1. In proclaiming the glory of *Jesus Christ*. 2. In preaching penance. 3. In reprov'ing vice.

Q. Why is he call'd the Baptist?

A. Because he wash'd or baptiz'd in *Jordan* the *Jews* that hearken'd to his doctrine, and likewise *Christ* himself.

Q. To what end did he baptize?

A. To prefigure that more admirable baptism instituted afterwards by *Jesus Christ*; and to instruct the *Jews* how to be cleans'd from sin by doing penance and believing in *Jesus Christ*.

Q. How did he die?

A. He died a martyr of chastity, for having reprov'd *Herod's* sinful commerce with his brother's wife. *Mat.* xiv. 3, &c.

Q. What think you of those superstitions, to which some Christians abandon themselves on this feast?

A. 'Tis taking an occasion from the memory of *Christ's* Precursor, to run from light to darkness; and from their Saviour, to their own perdition.

Q. What

§. 17. *St. Peter and Paul*, June 29: 203

Q. What are we to beg of God by St. John's intercession?

A. The virtues he has recommended to our imitation.

Q. If any time remain from prayer and the publick duties of the Church, how may it best be spent?

A. In reading the exhortations of *St. John*; or, after his example, in instructing the ignorant, or in endeavouring to bring such as are in sin or error, to the way of salvation. *Mat.* iii. *Luk.* iii. *Jo.* i. & iii.

SECTION XVII.

St. Peter and St. Paul, June 29.

Acts xii. 1—11.

Mat. xvi. 13—19.

Q. WHO was St. Peter?

A. A poor fisherman, call'd by *Jesus Christ* to be under himself the head of the Church militant.

Q. Why do you give St. Peter a preference to all the other apostles?

A. We give him no more than what our Saviour, in the opinion of the holy Fathers, confer'd upon him.

Q. How

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Q. Holy prove you it to be the opinion of the holy Fathers?

A. He is call'd in their writings the prince of the apostles and *supreme* preacher of the Church, the *head* of the apostolick company, the pastor intrusted with *Christ's* whole flock.

Q. What grounds from Scripture can you bring me of St. Peter's supremacy?

A. 1. *Christ* committed to him the government of his lambs and sheep without exception. (*Jo.* xxi. 15.) 2. Gave particularly to him the keys of heaven. (*Mat.* xvi. 19.) 3. Declar'd him to be the rock upon which he would build his Church. (*v.* 18.) And for that reason call'd him *Cephas* or *Petrus*, that is to say, a rock. (*Jo.* i. 42.) Hence the Evangelists in their lists of the apostles always name St. *Peter* before the rest; and St. *Matthew* calls him the first. *Mat.* x. 2. *Mar.* iii. 14, 16. *Luke.* vi. 13, 14. *Acts* i. 13.

Q. Where did St. Peter die?

A. He was crucified at *Rome*, and at his own request with his head downward, because he thought himself unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffer'd before him.

Q. Was St. Peter's dying at Rome any advantage to that episcopal See?

A. Yes. The Church of *Rome* was, upon account of St. *Peter's* Chair, establish'd the

§. 17. *St. Peter and Paul, June 29.* 205
the Mother of all other Churches, and
chief guardian of the divine truths; and all
other Churches are oblig'd to hold com-
munion with her. *St. Hierome Ep. lvii.*

*Q. What do the faithful owe to the present
bishop of Rome?*

A. A sincere obedience, as to the suc-
cessor of *St. Peter*, and the chief ecclesi-
astical governor.

*Q. Has the Church any writings of St.
Peter?*

A. She has two of his epistles.

Q. Who was St. Paul?

A. A learned Pharisee, who of a per-
secutor was miraculously chang'd by *Jesus
Christ* into a glorious preacher of the gos-
pel, and appointed doctor of the Gentiles.

*Q. Why was Jesus Christ pleas'd to con-
vert him so miraculously?*

A. To make appear in him the power
of divine grace, and to render his testimony
the more unquestionable.

Q. What has St. Paul written?

A. Fourteen admirable epistles.

Q. What was his death?

A. He was beheaded at *Rome*.

*Q. Was St. Paul in any manner equal to
St. Peter?*

A. He was equally empower'd by *Jesus
Christ* to preach the Gospel to all the
world;

206 *St. Peter and Paul, June 29. P. 3.*
world ; but he was not equal to *St. Peter*
in ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Q. What mean you by ecclesiastical jurisdiction ?

A. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is a power deriv'd from Christ, to govern the members of the Church.

Q. How was St. Paul inferior to St. Peter in point of jurisdiction ?

A. St. Paul had full power over all other Christians, but none over the apostles: Whereas St. Peter was set over all the sheep of Christ, among which St. Paul and the other apostles were certainly comprehended.

Q. Why do we keep the feast of these two apostles on the same day ?

A. Because they were both put to death at Rome on the same day, for the faith of Christ.

Q. Was their feast kept in the primitive ages ?

A. Theodosius the younger, anno 425, mentions it among the days that were then celebrated through the world, and consecrated to prayer ; on which he forbids any publick shews to be exhibited, because the minds of Christians on such days ought to be taken up with the service of God. Cod. Theo. xv. t. v. l. 5.

Q. And

§. 17. St. Peter and Paul, June 29. 207

Q. And was it usual in those times to desire their intercession?

A. St. Augustin tells us, that the Emperors themselves went to pray with respect at their tomb. And they acknowledg'd says St. Chrysostom, amidst their power and greatness, that they stood in need of having for their patrons and intercessors a fisherman and a tent-maker: And St. Paulinus, as he himself informs us, went every year to Rome, to assist at this solemnity. Aug. Ep. xlii. Chrys. hom. xxvi. in 2. ad Cor. Paulin. Ep. xvi.

Q. What virtues does the Church recommend to us from the example of St. Peter?

A. Faith, humility, and penance.

Q. What from the example of St. Paul?

A. An unlimited, a compassionate, and a disinterested charity to our neighbour.

Q. And what from both?

A. 1. An ardent zeal for the glory of Jesus Christ, and the salvation of our own and our neighbours souls.

2. An unwearied patience, and an undaunted courage in the profession of Christ's faith and maxims.

3. A lively confidence in the mercy of our Redeemer, who made choice of the one, who denied him; and of the other, who persecuted him, to be the main pillars of his Church.

Q. What

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Q. What are we to beg of God by their intercession?

A. 1. The virtues recommended by their example.

2. The divine spirit and protection, upon the pope, bishops, and inferior pastors.

3. The grace of conversion for all that by schism or heresy are divided from St. Peter's Chair.

Q. What part of the holy Scripture is proper to be read on this feast?

A. The fifth and the twentieth chapter of the *Acts*, St. Peter's two epistles, the four last chapters of St. Paul's second epistle to the *Corinthians*; the two first of his epistle to the *Galatians*; the last of his two to *Timothy*; or his epistle to the *Philippians*.

SECTION XVIII.

*The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin,
July 2.*

Cant. ii. 8—14. *Luke i. 39—47.*

Q. IS this a feast of obligation?

A. No. But however 'tis a day that calls upon us for more devotion and reflection, than other working-days.

Q. Why

Q. Why so?

A. Because the Church commemorates to day that charitable and humble Visit, which the blessed Virgin made to her Cousin St. Elizabeth. Luke i. 39, &c.

Q. In what condition were both of them?

A. The blessed Virgin was with child of Jesus Christ; and St. Elizabeth, of St. John.

Q. What happen'd at their meeting?

A. So soon as the blessed Virgin spoke, the Infant in the womb of Elizabeth, leap'd for joy, and ador'd his Saviour.

Q. What said St. Elizabeth to the blessed Virgin?

A. She saluted her in these words, *Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb;* and then added, *What a favour is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me!* Luke i. 42, 43.

Q. What does this teach us?

A. With what sentiments we ought to approach to Jesus Christ in the holy Communion.

Q. What was the answer of the blessed Virgin?

A. She spoke in answer to St. Elizabeth's salutation, that divine canticle *Magnificat*, wherein she glorifies God, and descends into her own nothingness.

Q. What

Q. What does this canticle teach us ?

A. How to express our thanks and gratitude after Communion.

Q. Why is this canticle daily said at Vespers ?

A. To commemorate that heavenly joy, the holy Ghost on that day infus'd into the hearts of *Mary, John* and *Elizabeth*; and to express our own, for the mystery of *Christ's* Incarnation.

Q. What must we beg of God by the intercession of the blessed Virgin ?

A. 1. A share of those graces with which *Christ* fill'd *St. John*.

2. Grace so to regulate our visits and conversation, as to render them agreeable to almighty God.

Q. What rules are to be observ'd as to visits ?

A. That idle visits, and much more such as are dangerous, be carefully avoided.

Q. Why so ?

A. Because our soul and our time is the price of the blood of *Jesus Christ*.

Q. What's the second ?

A. The visits which may, or must be made be govern'd by a right intention.

Q. How do you mean ?

A. I mean they must be made out of a principle of duty, charity, Christian friendship, gratitude or respect.

Q. Is

Q. Is it any fault in a Christian not to visit the sick, the poor, the afflicted, or the imprison'd?

A. These kind of visits sometimes cannot be omitted without endangering our salvation. *Mat. xxv. 41, &c.*

Q. Why so?

A. Because the quality of Christian strictly obliges us to these works of mercy.

Q. What think you of such, as generally find the day too long for them, unless some hours of it be pass'd away in idle visits?

A. 'Tis to be fear'd, they are but little acquainted with those many important duties, which are inseparably annex'd to the quality of a Christian, and to their state of life.

Q. What direction can you give me as to conversation?

A. A good Christian will take care to avoid those faults, which are generally found in worldly conversation.

Q. What are those faults?

A. They are chiefly these five, 1. Unprofitable discourse. 2. The commending worldly pomps and vanities. 3. Detraction. 4. Boasting or talking of oneself, ones family, fortune, relations, &c. 5. Words bordering upon immodesty.

Q. Are jests allowable in conversation?

A. Provided

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A. Provided they break not in upon religion, charity, or civility, nor be carried too far; they are helpful to an innocent recreation. *S. Fran. Sales Introd. Par. 3. Ch. xxvii.*

SECTION XIX.

St. James Apostle, July 25.

I Cor. ii. 9—15.

Mat. xx. 23.

Q. WHAT was St. James?

A. A fisherman, who was call'd with his brother St. John to the apostleship, and immediately left his father and his nets to follow Christ.

Q. What particular favours did he receive from his Lord and Master?

A. He was one of the three apostles that our Lord admitted to the more intimate transactions of his life; as to be an eye-witness of his glorious Transfiguration, (*Mat. xvii. 1.*) of his raising to life the daughter of the prince of the Synagogue, and of his sorrow in the garden. *Mark v. 37. Ch. xiv. 33.*

Q. Did not both he and his brother John meet also with some rebukes from Christ?

A. Yes. Not only when their zeal for
their

§. 19. St. *James* Apostle, July 25. 213

their Master's honour carried them too far (as related in St. *John's* life, page 169) but on another occasion also when their mother prompted by them, petition'd for the principal places of honour next to his person.

Q. What may we learn from our Saviour's answer to this request?

A. 1. That to have a place in the kingdom of *Christ*, we must drink his chalice, that is, we must have a share in his sufferings.

2. That the highest places would be given to those for whom they were prepared by his Father, in consequence of their superior merit and virtue.

Q. Were not the rest of the disciples offended at this request?

A. Yes. And this gave our Saviour occasion to instruct them in the nature of his kingdom, shewing them that in his service, humility was the way to honour; alledging his own example as a pattern of it, who came not to be serv'd himself but to serve others, even at the expence of his own life. *Mat.* xx. 25, 26.

Q. In what manner did St. James share in his master's sufferings?

A. By being apprehended and beheaded by the order of *Herod Agrippa*: And so he became the first of the apostles that died for the faith of *Christ*.

Q. What

Q. What must we beg of God by his intercession?

A. 1. Grace to subdue all pride and haughtiness of mind.

2. To make a right use of prosperity and adversity, and to rise from the spiritual death of our souls, whenever we are so unhappy as to fall into sin.

SECTION XX.

St. Anne, July 26.

Prov. xxxi. 10—31. Mat. xiii. 44—52.

Q. WHO was St. Anne? —

A. The mother of the blessed Virgin Mary.

Q. What instruction may we suppose she gave her daughter, the blessed Virgin?

A. Doubtless she gave her early lessons of humility, chastity, patience, love of God and her neighbour, and of all other virtues, so soon as her tender years seem'd capable, of receiving the like good impressions.

Q. What is to be recommended to married women; and what are they to pray for?

A. 1. That

A. 1. That no excess of solicitude for their family may take off their thoughts from providing for eternity.

2. That by the love of worldly vanities, they neglect not the care of their families.

3. That they affect no dresses for the pleasing of strangers eyes, or gratifying self-love and vanity.

4. That they patiently submit to the difficulties of their state.

5. That in short they may be wanting in no duty to their husbands, children or servants.

Q. What are the duties of parents to their children?

A. To take care of their education and of their settlement.

Q. How are they to take care of their children's education?

A. By giving them, 1. Instruction. 2. Good example. 3. Correction.

Q. What is to be said of mothers, who will not take pains to instruct their children themselves; and are so fond of them, as not to seek abroad what instruction is necessary?

A. Such mothers will certainly at Christ's tribunal be answerable for all the miscarriages of their children.

Q. When should parents begin to instruct their children?

A. From

A. From their infancy, 1. By instilling into them some of the chief maxims of the gospel, as a love and fear of God, an aversion to sin and vanity, forgiving injuries, &c.

2. By teaching them the ordinary prayers, and how to make short acts of the virtues most necessary to salvation, and by enlarging these instructions as they advance in age.

Q. And when their children are growing up, what care is then to be taken?

A. 1. They must keep them to their hours of praying and reading. 2. Teach them to employ themselves. 3. Oblige them to order and discipline. 4. Examine their company and conversation. 5. Study to make them easy in a regular life, by allowing them their diversions, and encouraging them in whatever is decent. 6. To take care they lie separate, if possible; and by no means to suffer boys and girls to lodge in the same chamber, much less to have the same bed.

Q. What are the ordinary failings of parents in point of instruction?

A. There are too many, who instead of laying the foundations of a virtuous life, sow in their children's minds the seeds of vanity, ambition, revenge, self-love, gluttony, lying, detraction and the like.

Q. Why

Q. Why are parents oblig'd to give good example?

A. Because children naturally imitate what they see done by others, especially by persons whom they love and respect.

Q. What need of correction?

A. 'Tis needful for preventing both their children's and their own damnation. *Ecccl. xxx. 8, &c.*

Q. Ought parents to give correction when they are in passion?

A. By no means. Forasmuch as such correction, not being attended by God's blessing, serves only to exasperate them and make them worse.

Q. How then is correction to be given?

A. It must be govern'd by reason, accompanied with sweetness and moderation; and with no other regard than that of God's honour and their children's salvation.

Q. How are parents to take care of their children's settlement?

A. By an early provision of what may be necessary to support them according to their condition; and more especially to help them to that state of life to which God calls them.

Q. How may parents know to what state God calls their children?

A. 1. By consulting God in their prayers.

2. By examining the inclinations and talents of their children.

L

3. By

218 St. Laurence, August 10. P. 3.

3. By taking advice of a prudent and pious person, without hearkening to the suggestions of self-interest or ambition.

Q. Is it a sin to force a child to embrace a state, to which there appears no vocation from almighty God?

A. A very heinous sin; and such as draws after it a thousand more.

SECTION XXI.

St. Laurence, August 10.

2 Cor. ix. 6—10. John xii. 24—26.

Q. WHAT was this Saint?

A. A Deacon and Martyr at Rome.

Q. Why does the Church celebrate his feast in so particular a manner as to keep a fast before it?

A. The more effectually to recommend to our imitation the virtues of charity to the poor, love of suffering and constancy, which were eminent in this great Saint.

Q. Wherein appear'd his charity and care of the poor?

A. In distributing to them the treasures of the Church, as the best way of securing them from the avarice of the heathen tyrant.

Q. What was his love of suffering?

A. It

§. 21. St. Laurence, August 10. 219

A. It was so great, that seeing pope *Xistus* led to martyrdom, he sigh'd and complain'd that himself was not to accompany him.

Q. *What was his constancy in suffering?*

A. Being soon after apprehended and stretch'd upon a gridiron, in order to be broil'd to death, he had so much courage as to say to his executioners, *Turn and eat 'tis roasted enough.*

Q. *How must we imitate his charity to the poor?*

A. By depositing in their hands our unnecessary riches, that the tyrant world may not rob us of them, by making us spend them on its vanities.

Q. *What effect should his love of suffering have upon us?*

A. It should at least encourage us not to start from our faith or the methods of a virtuous life, for fear of what the world may say or do against us.

Q. *What do you learn from his constancy upon the gridiron?*

A. To beg by his intercession of almighty God, that fire of charity, which may render us as it did him, victorious over all our spiritual enemies; and a generous contempt of this mortal life, which must necessarily be lost, before we can arrive at a life eternal. *Mat. x. 39.*

SECTION XXII.

*The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin,
August 15.*

Ecclus. xxiv. 11—20 Luke xviii. 38—40.

Q. *WHAT* means the word Assumption?

A. *Assumption* is sometimes said of the death of Saints; because 'tis then God takes them to himself, and translates their souls from earth to heaven. And it is *piously* believed that not only the soul of the blessed Virgin, but her body also is already in glory; especially since this priviledge is not so singular, as those others of being a mother and a virgin and even the mother of God.

Q. *What grounds are there for this opinion?*

A. 1. We cannot think that the mother of God was depriv'd of a priviledge, granted to many at *Christ's* Resurrection, to wit, of rising in body before the last day. *Mat. xxvii. 52.*

2. The primitive Church, which was very industrious in seeking after and preserving the Relicks of the apostles, *St. Stephen*, and other Saints makes no mention of the Relicks of the mother of God.

Q. Why

§. 22. *The Assumption, August 15.* 221

Q. Why does the Church in the holy Mass on this day invite us to rejoice?

A. Because we have great reason on this occasion to congratulate, 1. With the blessed Virgin for the consummation of her grace and glory. *Prov. xxxi. 29.*

2. With the court of heaven, in the triumph of the mother of God.

3. With ourselves, for having the mother of mercy to appear and intercede for us, by the merits of her Son, at the throne of God.

Q. To what degree is the blessed Virgin exalted in heaven?

A. In proportion to her charity, humility and dignity upon earth.

Q. How may we deserve her intercession; and have the happiness at death of obtaining heaven?

A. By the imitation of her virtues, her love of God, her humility, purity, patience, conformity to the will of God, the spirit of adoration, praise and thanksgiving; these being the necessary dispositions of a soul, for attaining that state of bliss.

Q. How are we to imitate her humility?

A. 1. In regard of God, by owning that all we have is the pure effect of his bounty, and by a cheerful submission to all his appointments.

2. In regard of our neighbour, by de-

spising none, and being mild to all, by not contending for our own way or opinion, by forgiving injuries, and esteeming all others better than ourselves.

3. In regard of ourselves, in having a true knowledge of our unworthiness, in receiving abjection and contempt with peace and comfort, in checking our own will, in taking reproofs or advice quietly, in suppressing all words of vanity, and refusing no good office as if it were beneath us.

Q. What devotion is proper for these eight days?

A. 1. Frequently to thank almighty God for the graces and glory bestow'd on her whom he made choice of to be the mother of his beloved Son and of all the faithful. *John xix. 26, 27.*

2. In a more particular manner to recommend ourselves to her protection and intercession.

3. To meditate upon the virtues, of which she has given us an example, and be ashamed to see ourselves so deeply tainted with the contrary vices.

4. To beg these virtues of almighty God by her intercession, and to practise them upon occasions.

5. To beg a happy death for ourselves and others, especially for all that are now in their agony, and grace to prepare from
this

§. 23. *St. Bartholomew, August 24. 223.*
this day for it by a virtuous life, lest any
farther delay, be punish'd with the loss of
time and grace. *Mat. xxiv. 42. Luke*
xii. 20. Mat. xxv. 13.

SECTION XXIII.

St. Bartholomew, August 24

I Cor. xii. 27—31. Luke vi. 12—19.

Q. *WHO was St. Bartholomew?*

A. An apostle of *Jesus Christ*,
who preach'd the gospel in *Armenia*, where
he is said to have been flead alive.

Q. *How must we sanctify this feast?*

A. In the manner above-mention'd
Page 22.

SECTION XXIV.

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Sept. 8.

Prov. viii. 22—35. Mat. i. 1—16.

Q. *WHO were the blessed Virgin's parents?*

A. *St. Joachim* and *St. Anne.*

Q. *Of what family was she?*

A. Of the royal family of *David.*

Q. Was she, like the rest of mankind, born in sin?

A. We ought not by any means to think so; it being very improbable, that she should be less favour'd than *St. John Baptist*, who was sanctified in his mother's womb, and that at the voice of the blessed Virgin.

Q. What then was her sanctity?

A. A sanctity to that extraordinary degree, as to be exempted all her life from sin, as well venial as mortal. *Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. can. xxiii.*

Q. How did she live?

A. A poor humble, hidden life, attending to nothing else but God and her duty.

Q. What was most remarkable in her life?

A. The promise she made in her tender age of preserving her virginity, to which she found no encouragement from past ages.

Q. What virtues were the chief companions of her virginity?

A. Prayer and retirement.

Q. What may we learn from the early preparation she made for the conceiving the Son of God?

A. That it ought to be the care of our who'e life, to dispose ourselves for receiving of God's benefits, and for the receiving of *Jesus Christ* in the blessed Eucharist.

Q. Who ought principally to imitate the blessed Virgin?

A. Young

§. 24. *The Nativity, &c. Sept. 8.* 225

A. Young Virgins and all women kind, she being the honour of their sex.

Q. *In what are they chiefly to imitate her?*

A. In her retirement, modesty, chastity and humility.

Q. *What other lessons have we from this festival?*

A. To do all things with as little noise as possible; since God so order'd, that nothing appear'd in this new-born Virgin (so accomplish'd with grace, and design'd for so great a dignity) which might recommend her to the eyes of men. 2. Never to boast of our good works, abilities or extraction; nor invite others to speak in our commendation. 3. If rank and quality oblige a Christian to admit somewhat of state, that he is not to love it, nor think himself the greater for it; but rather to combat the injustice of being set up to be admir'd and coveted, when on so many accounts he deserves to be contemn'd. 4. Not to be loud and talkative or contentious in conversation, nor yet morose and dull; but rather chearful, free and easy.

Q. *And what is to be remember'd as to spiritual birth of children?*

A. That parents ought not to admit those to answer for their children at the font who know not the way to heaven themselves, or voluntarily go out of it.

Q. What is to be our devotion during this octave ?

A. 1. To thank God for the graces wherewith he prevented the blessed Virgin, as also for the rich present he made this day to the earth, in the birth of the blessed Virgin, of whom was to be born the Saviour of the world.

2. To beseech almighty God that it may be a day of new birth to us, by engaging anew in his service, and resolving to make good our baptismal obligations.

3. To beg by her intercession we may be faithful in corresponding, as she was, with the many blessings he continually showers down upon us.

4. To meditate on these virtues, of which she has set us a pattern ; and to beg grace to copy them out in our lives.

Q. For whom beside must we pray ?

A. 1. For children as yet unborn, that God would bring them safe into the world, and to the grace of baptism.

2. For children already baptiz'd, that they may never lose their baptismal innocence.

3. For all the faithful, that by a thorough penance and amendment of life, they may recover the grace of baptism.

SECTION XXV.

St. *Matthew* Apostle and Evangelist, *Sept.* 21.

Ezech. i. 10—14.

Mat. ix. 9—13.

Q. *WHAT* was St. *Matthew* before he was call'd to follow Christ?

A. A Publican, that is to say, an officer employ'd in collecting customs upon goods, and receiving toll from passengers; all of which profession were look'd upon by the *Jews* to be enormous sinners.

Q. *How* was he call'd to follow Christ?

A. He gives us this account of himself; That *Jesus* passing by, saw a man sitting in the custom-house, whose name was *Matthew*, and said to him, *Follow me*, who rising immediately follow'd him, and made a feast for him, to which a great many publicans and sinners came and sat down with *Jesus*. *Mat.* ix. 9. &c.

Q. *What* do you learn from hence?

A. 1. That there is mercy ready for the worst of sinners if they forsake their evil way and become obedient to the call of God.

2. That the happiness of a soul may often

often depend upon its fidelity and obedience to the first voice and call of almighty God.

3. That where it is for the interest and glory of God, such as have a zeal for him will not be concern'd for their own reputation.

4. Four marks of a true conversion.

Q. What are those marks ?

A. 1. A true convert will avoid the occasions of sin. *Num.* xvi. 26. *Prov.* vi. 27. *Math.* xxvii. 69. *Eccli.* xxi. 2. *Mat.* v. 29. *Gen.* iii. 3. 3 *Reg.* xi. 1, 2.

2. Will follow *Christ* by the practice of good works.

3. Will express in the best manner he is able, his gratitude to the divine mercy.

4. Will be so far from being ashamed to own his conversion, that he will endeavour to bring others to do the same.

Q. Were the Pharisees scandaliz'd at our Saviour for his eating with publicans and sinners ?

A. Yes. But he told them, that it was the sick and infirm, and not the sound and healthful, that needed the physician : That he preferr'd mercy to sacrifice, and came to call, not the just, but sinners.

Q. What may we learn from hence ?

A. Four essential truths, 1. That *Jesus* is the great Physician of our souls.

2. That we all stand in need of him.

3. That, if we desire to find him our physician, we must confess and acknowledge our infirmities.

4. That

4. That our souls are never so dangerously sick as when we proudly think ourselves to be in health.

Q. What do we learn beside?

A. 1. That under a false zeal there is often hid a real pride, that is scandaliz'd at every thing, complains and passes censure upon every thing.

2. That the more sensible we are of our being sinners, the greater right we have to call upon *Jesus Christ*, and to hope for mercy from him, if we are but ready to obey his call.

Q. What devotion is proper for this feast?

A. 1. To praise the mercy of our redeemer, who came to call sinners.

2. To pray for the conversion of some sinner, and for our own.

3. To beg comfort for dejected sinners.

4. To beg for ourselves and others a true humility, and a faithful correspondence with the graces and inspirations of almighty God.

SECTION XXVI.

Michaelmas-Day, Sept. 29.

Rev. i. 1—5.

Mat. xviii. 1—10.

Q. WHY is this feast so call'd?

A. Because St. *Michael* is the Chief of the holy Angels, and that on this day

230 Michaelmas-Day, Sept. 29. P. 3:
day the Church celebrates his feast, with
that of all the other Angels.

*Q. How many orders or Quires of Angels
are there?*

A. The Scripture mentions these nine,
1. Cherubims. 2. Seraphins. 3. Thrones.
4. Principalities. 5. Powers. 6. Domi-
nations. 7. Virtues. 8. Archangels. 9.
Angels. And these are divided into three
Hierarchies.

Q. What are the Angels?

A. They are creatures spiritual and in-
telligent, which are not made to be united
to bodies.

*Q. Why do you say the Angels are spiritual
creatures?*

A. Because they have no body, no figure
nor colour; nor can they in their own
nature be perceiv'd by any of our senses.
Heb. i. 7.

*Q. Why do you say they are intelligent
creatures?*

A. Because they have knowledge and
understanding, as men have, but in a much
perfecter degree.

*Q. Where are the holy Angels, and how
are they employ'd?*

A. They are in heaven, and always in
the presence of God, whom they see, adore
and praise; and are inseparably united to
him for all eternity *Tob. xii. 15. Dan. vii.*
10. Mat. xviii. 10. Apoc. v. 11.

2. They

§. 26. Michaelmas-Day, Sept. 29. 231

2. They are the ministers of God always ready to obey him: And God makes use of them to execute his orders in regard of other creatures, and especially in regard of men. *Pf.* 102. 22. *Heb.* i. 14.

Q. What do the holy Angels do in relation to mankind?

A. 1. They rejoice at the conversion of a sinner. *Luke* xv. 10.

2. They present our prayers to God, and pray for us. *Zach.* i. 12. *Tob.* xii. 12. *Apo.* viii. 3.

3. God makes use of them for to signify his will to man, or to do wonders upon extraordinary occasions in their favour. *Mat.* i. 20. ii. 13. xxiv. 31. xxvi. 53. xxviii. 2. *Luke* i. 11, 26. ii. 9. *Jo.* v. 4. *Acts* i. 10. v. 19. x. 3. xii. 7, 23. xxvii. 23, and in many places of the Old Testament.

4. God has appointed them the guardians and protectors of the Church and of every one of the faithful. *Mat.* xviii. 10. *Acts* xii. 15. *ps.* xxxiii. 8. *ps.* xc. 11, 12. *Dan.* xii. 1.

Q. What instructions do the Angels give us?

A. 1. That as their whole business is to adore bless and magnify God, to be wholly subject to him, and perform his will in all things, so we ought by following their example, to dispose ourselves for that which we hope will be our entertainment for ever.

2. To

232 Michaelmas-Day, Sept. 29. P. 3.

2. To undervalue all earthly goods, honours and satisfactions, and settle a fix'd judgment, that the best employment of our understanding is to know him, and the ways that lead to him, and of our will and affections to love him. And, 3. For this end to spend the *Sundays* and holy-days in such a manner, as to answer the design of their institution, by giving them to Him, to whom they belong.

Q. How are we to direct our devotions on this feast?

A. It is our duty, 1. To join with the Angels in acts of adoration, praise, thanksgiving and love.

2. To undervalue all earthy things, and earnestly to desire a share of the happiness they enjoy, and pray that we may arrive at that unchangeable state.

3. To beg by their intercession, grace to imitate their ready obedience to the orders of almighty God, their zeal for his glory, their mutual charity and concord, their purity, humility, &c.

4. To thank God for the favours and protection receiv'd by their ministry, and to pray for a continuance of them.

5. To thank St. *Michael* and the other holy Angels, for the favours they have convey'd unto us.

6. To

§. 27. *The Angel Guardian*, Oct. 2. 233

6. To recommend ourselves and the whole Church to his protection; and to desire him to guard us, particularly at the hour of death.

SECTION XXVII.

The Feast of the Angel-Guardians, Oct. 2.

Ex. xxiii. 20—23. *Mat.* xviii. 1—10.

Q. **I***S this day a feast of obligation?*

A. No. But however it deserves to be taken notice of, more than common working-days.

Q. *What Angels do you call Guardians?*

A. Those whom God out of his great mercy has order'd to watch over us, and to take particular care of us.

Q. *What then does your Angel-Guardian do for you?*

A. He accompanies me wherever I go; he preserves and rescues me from many dangers, he succours me in time of temptation; he guides and governs me by interior inspirations.

Q. *What do you owe to your Angel Guardian?*

A. 1. Gratitude. 2. Respect. 3. Submission. 4. Confidence.

Q. *What obligation of gratitude?*

A. For the great concern he has for me, and the many favours he does me.

Q. *Why*

Q. Why are you to respect him?

A. Upon account of his excellence, his dignity and sanctity. And therefore I ought to blush at the very thought of doing any thing in his presence, which I should be ashamed to do in the sight of a good Christian.

Q. Why do you owe him submission?

A. Because he is a wise and powerful, a faithful and a zealous friend.

Q. Why are you to have a confidence in him?

A. Because he is an intercessor, that loves me, knows my wants and desires, and has great credit in heaven.

2. Because God has recommended me to his care. *Psal. xc. 11.*

3. He is a profess'd enemy to my spiritual enemies.

Q. What may we conclude from these truths?

A. That we ought to have a great deference and respect for every one of the Faithful, since their Angels always see the face of God. *Mat. xviii. 10.*

Q. What devotion is suitable to the day?

A. 1. To thank God for his love and mercy in committing us to such protectors.

2. To beg pardon of God and his Angels, our Guardians, for having ungratefully offend-

4. 28. *St. Simon and Jude, Oct. 28.* 235
offended him, and by so doing grieved
them.

3. By a sincere conversion, an humble
confession, and a devout Communion, to
give them an occasion of joy, and to ren-
der ourselves more dear to them, and more
worthy of their protection.

4. To pay them the thanks, the respect,
the submission which we owe them; and
by a fervent devotion to make amends for
all past neglects.

5. To beg their protection in all our
ways, and particularly at the hour of death.

SECTION XXVIII.

St. Simon and Jude Apostles, Oct. 28.

Eph. iv. 7—13.

John xv. 17—29.

Q. *WHAT does the Scripture remark
concerning them?*

A. That they were call'd to be apostles
and that St. Jude was nearly related to
our Lord.

Q. *Are not all Christians related to our
Saviour?*

A. Yes. By baptism we are all made mem-
bers of his mystical body, children of his Fa-
ther, and coheirs with him of eternal glory.
And he assures us he will look upon those

as

as a brother, sister, or mother, who do the will of his heavenly Father. *Mat. xii. 15.*

Q. How may we have a share in the reward of the apostles?

A. By giving charitable advice, good example, pious books, or alms toward the conversion of sinners.

Q. What has St. Jude particularly recommended to us in his epistle?

A. Earnestly to contend for the faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints, and to build all we do on this most holy faith. *ver. 3. 20.*

Q. And what does this teach us?

A. That the only way we have to learn this faith, is to hear that Church which having had the apostles for her teachers, and being to continue to the end of the world, can prove the succession both of her own visible existence, and of the doctrine she has receiv'd and taught.

S E C T I O N XXIX.

All-Saints, Nov. 1.

Rev. vii. 2—12.

Mat. v. 1—12.

Q. WHY was this feast instituted?

A. 1. To honour God in all his Saints (there being but a few of them, who

who have their memories celebrated apart) and thank him for having made them partakers of his glory.

2. To repair the defects committed in the celebrating of the Saints particular feasts.

Q. What advantages may we expect from this solemnity?

A. 1. We may, if we be not wanting to our duty, obtain more abundant graces by multiplying our intercessors.

2. The united examples of Saints of both sexes, and of all ages and professions, will be apt to spur us on to a more vigorous pursuit of the virtues which may fit us for a place amongst them.

Q. By what means may we best excite our selves to imitate the Saints?

A. By considering, 1. That the Saints had the same difficulties to overcome, as we have.

2. That we have all those helps which enabled them to overcome.

3. We have no less encouragement; and, 4. No more to do, than the Saints had.

Q. What difficulties had the Saints to encounter withal?

A. They were to fight against the devil and his suggestions; against the world, and its threats and promises, its maxims
and

and example ; against their own passions and concupiscence : and what others can we fear.

Q. What helps have we in order to become Saints ?

A. 1. The merits of *Jesus Christ*. 2. The inspirations and graces of his holy Spirit. 3. The protection and intercession of the Saints and Angels. 4. The holy sacraments. 5. The reading or hearing of Divine truths. 6. Good example. 7. Temporal prosperity or adversity ; and the Saints had no other.

Q. What encouragement ?

A. 1. The example of *Jesus Christ* and of his Saints. 2. Eternal misery to be avoided. 3. Eternal happiness to be gain'd.

Q. What is to be done, that we may be admitted into the company of the Saints ?

A. All that we have to do is, to love God, who is infinitely amiable ; and to keep his commandments, which are not hard. *Mat. xi. 30. 1 John v. 3.*

Q. How then are we to employ ourselves on this feast ?

A. 1. To thank God for the glory he has bestow'd upon the Saints, and provided for us.

2. By considering the abovemention'd truths, to make a firm resolution of serving God.

3. By

3. By lively acts of faith and hope, to raise in our souls a contempt of earth, and a longing desire of being admitted into that blessed assembly.

SECTION XXX.

All-Souls, Nov. 2.

1 Cor. xv. 51—57. John v. 25—29.

Q. *Is the custom of praying for the dead, ancient in the Church of God?*

A. This day has been set apart for that duty, ever since the beginning of the eleventh Age. But in all Ages of the Church, the faithful used to offer up the Mass, to give alms, and to fast, that they might obtain for the souls departed, a diminution of their pains. (*Tert. de Cor. Mil. c. iii. Aug. Ench. c. cix. cx.*) And *Aerius* (in the fourth Age) was reputed a heretick for condemning this practice. *Aug. l. de Hær. b. 53.*

Q. *Is this devotion consonant to Scripture?*

A. The second book of *Maccabees* assures us, 'tis a wholesome and holy cogitation to pray for the dead, that they may be loos'd from their sins. (*Ch. xii. 46.*) And tho' the

the Protestants will not allow these books, as a part of Scripture; yet St. *Austin* says, the Catholick Church allow'd them. *De Civ. Dei*. l. xviii. c. xxxvi.

Q. For what souls are we to pray?

A. For such only as may be presum'd to be in purgatory; and therefore not for martyrs, infants, nor canonized Saints, nor for any that die out of the communion of the Catholick Church.

Q. May we pray for such as liv'd holily in the Church?

A. Yes. For the judgment of God is different from that of man.

Q. May we pray for such Catholicks as liv'd wickedly?

A. We may; unless they died in the actual commission of a mortal sin: For we hope in the unlimited mercy of almighty God.

Q. What motives are there to induce us to this devotion, of praying for the dead?

A. To pray for the dead, is an argument of our charity to God, our neighbour and ourselves.

Q. How is it an argument of our charity to God?

A. Because by praying for the delivery of those pious souls, we desire that God may be prais'd and glorified by them in heaven.

Q. How

Q. How is it a charity to our neighbour?

A. Those souls are elect members of *Jesus Christ*, and therefore in a particular manner our neighbours and fellow-members; so that upon account of their great and patient suffering, they very much deserve our compassion and assistance.

Q. How is it a charity to ourselves?

A. 1. It makes us think of the next world, which is the great duty of a Christian.

2. It provides us friends in heaven.

3. It renders us more capable of relief, when we come to purgatory.

4. It encourages us to avoid even venial sin; to bear patiently the afflictions of this life, and to do all the penance we are able, which is the most effectual means to avoid both hell and purgatory.

SECTION XXXI.

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin,
Nov. 21.

Ecclus. xxiv. 14—16. Luke xi. 27, 28.

Q. WHAT's the intention of the Church in this feast of devotion?

M

A. I. To

A. 1. To praise and thank almighty God for the graces, with which he so timely prevented the blessed Virgin, who was the first of her sex that made profession of continuing a Virgin all her life.

2. To excite us to the imitation of this glorious Mother of all the Elect.

Q. *How are we to imitate her?*

A. By presenting and dedicating ourselves, as she did, to God's service.

Q. *And how are we to offer ourselves?*

A. 1. By humbling ourselves in his presence, confessing our infirmity, and owning that if he help us not with his grace, we are certainly lost. 2. By making a protestation of being faithful in resisting evil, and performing whatever he requires of us. 3. Putting ourselves in a disposition of accepting from his hand sickness, pain, poverty, afflictions, or whatever he appoints.

Q. *How did she dedicate herself?*

A. Early, entirely, and for ever.

Q. *How early?*

A. In her infancy, according to a pious tradition of the Eastern Church; being well persuaded that all the moments of her life were few enough to make a present of to her Creator.

Q. *Why do you say, entirely?*

A. Because she undoubtedly renounc'd her

her own will, and all the riches and pleasures of this world.

Q. What reason have we to believe this?

A. We have this reason, that, since we ought to believe every thing that makes to the honour of the blessed Virgin, without prejudice to Faith; we must think, she certainly took God's will for the only rule of her actions; she desir'd no other riches but to possess God's grace; no other pleasure, but to please and serve him.

Q. How did she dedicate herself for ever?

A. She was constant in her good resolutions, and made it her daily care to improve in virtue.

Q. What are those persons to do, who have already dedicated themselves to God?

A. To renew this day their vows or purposes of serving God.

Q. And what advice do you give to those that are not as yet settled in any state?

A. 1. To resolve from this day forward under the protection and patronage of the blessed Virgin, to give themselves entirely to the service of almighty God.

2. To beg by her intercession, that God would be pleas'd to direct them to that state of life, in which he designs that they shall save their souls.

Q. What

Q. What ought mothers to do on this feast?

A. 1. To offer up their children to almighty God, and daily to renew the oblation.

2. To beg grace so to educate them, that they and their children may both inherit eternal life.

F I N I S.



E R R A T U M.

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